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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

EASTERN AFFAIRS.

PART 20.

JAN.-JUNE 1927.

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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

EASTERN AFFAIRS

PART XX

JANUARY TO JUNE 1927

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting Eastern Affairs.

PART XX.

CHAPTER I.—ARABIA.

No. 1.

Acting Agent, Jeddah, to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received January 8.)

(No. 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

Jeddah, January 8, 1927.

AGREEMENT signed by Ibn Saud and ruling Idrisi in October has been published to-day.

Territory of Asir as defined in treaty of 1339 (1920) between Ibn Saud and late Sayyid Mahommed is placed under suzerainty of Ibn Saud, who undertakes its defence. The Idrisi continue to be responsible for internal affairs of Asir, but will not enter into political negotiations with any Government nor grant commercial concessions nor make war and peace except with consent of Ibn Saud. Despatch follows.

(Sent to Aden.)

No. 2.

[E 170/76/91]

Sir C. Hurst to Sir Austen Chamberlain.

Foreign Office, January 10, 1927.

Sir,

IN accordance with your instructions I proceeded to Paris on the 4th January to resume my conversations with M. Fromageot on the subject of the Red Sea lighthouses.

I have the honour to submit to you herewith a note containing the results of my discussions at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

I have, &c.

CECIL J. B. HURST.

Enclosure in No. 2.

RED SEA LIGHTHOUSES.

Note by Sir C. Hurst.

CAREFUL study of the papers on the way over to Paris led me to the conclusion that, if some settlement of the controversy with the French is to be found quickly, the idea that the French Ottoman Lighthouse Company is entitled to claim, as of right, that it should be restored to the working of the lighthouses must be got out of the way, and some acceptable arrangement found on a new basis. So long as the

Lighthouse Company, and the French Government in support of the company, are allowed to think that they have got some sort of a claim about which they could ask for arbitration and pose as the party which has been wronged, no progress will be made, because the company will be putting forward terms which His Majesty's Government will be having continually to resist as unfair and unacceptable to British shipping.

As the quickest way of clearing the 1899 Convention out of the way I told M. Fromageot at the beginning of our conversation that I understood that his Government were anxious that the Lighthouse Company should be restored to the possession of the three island lights and that we should, therefore, be glad if they would take them over on the 1st April. They could then work the lights on the basis of the Convention of 1899.

Examination of the relevant documents showed M. Fromageot that this would mean that the company would have to look to the Mediterranean light dues for the cost of the upkeep of the lights (article 1 of the Convention of 1899), that no light dues could be levied on shipping because no dues had ever been agreed with the foreign Powers, and that, if and when any light dues were levied, they would all have to be paid over to the Turkish Government (article 8 of the Convention of 1899). Furthermore, the Lighthouse Company would have no ground for asking for an adaptation of the concession under the Concessions Protocol of 1923, because there would be no State to which the sovereignty over the islands would have passed with whom such adaptation could be agreed.

I also impressed upon M. Fromageot that, if the company wanted to stand on the concession, it must be the concession as it stood without modification. Except on the basis of the concession, the company had no *locus standi* in point of law, and if they were not satisfied with the position which the concession of 1899 would give them, they must not pose as entitled to any rights at all.

I then went on to explain that His Majesty's Government had abandoned all idea of obtaining the sovereignty of the islands, that they were not now prepared to accept it and that, so far as they were concerned, they would not object to the lights and the islands passing under the control of the Italians.

M. Fromageot did not seem to think that the restoration of the lights to be worked in precise accordance with the terms of the 1899 concession would be acceptable to the company, and we then set to work, with the assistance of M. Maugras, the Quai D'Orsay official in charge of these questions, to find the basis of a new arrangement satisfactory to all parties.

The result of our deliberations was that these three island lights had best be worked in future on the basis of some international agreement analogous to that relating to Cape Spartel.

The outline of such an arrangement would be that the Powers whose shipping uses the Red Sea and would get the benefit of the lights would agree to employ the French company to run the lighthouses in return for a fixed annual sum to be divided between the Powers in proportion to their shipping passing through the Suez Canal. The sum to be paid to the company would be based on the actual expenditure, with a reasonable margin of profit, and would be subject to revision every five years. Similarly, the division between the Powers of the sum payable to the company would also be subject to revision every five years.

The object of throwing the liability primarily on to the Powers is that it gets over the difficulties as to the place at which any light dues can be levied, as Suez would entail the agreement of the Suez Canal Company and the Egyptian Government, as well as of all the Powers whose ships were to pay.

Each Government would be at liberty to pay its contribution from whatever source it pleased, and in the case of Great Britain the contribution could by appropriate legislation be thrown on to the General Lighthouse Fund as in the case of Cape Spartel.

I warned M. Fromageot that Australia and India might have to be dealt with separately from Great Britain.

An arrangement on the above lines is, I am satisfied, the only one which can be carried through with sufficient rapidity to satisfy the Treasury desire that the burden now borne by the Exchequer should terminate at the end of the present financial year.

M. Maugras undertook to get into touch with the Lighthouse Company and explain the proposal to them, laying stress on the consequences which would ensue from their relying on the 1899 concession and explaining to them that, so far as His Majesty's Government were concerned, they would be glad if the company would resume possession on the 1st April.

On Friday morning, the 7th January, I saw M. Cruppi, the manager of the Lighthouse Company, in company with M. Maugras. M. Maugras had already explained the situation to M. Cruppi and given him an outline of what was suggested. M. Cruppi said that the idea of an international arrangement for the Red Sea lighthouses analogous to that concerning Cape Spartel was wholly new to him and he could not commit himself. His conversation showed, however, that he felt he had better not make difficulties or he might get left with nothing at all.

In the course of the discussion he begged that the new arrangement might purport to be provisional. His company could then hope that in days to come an agreement could be come to for the levy of dues on shipping, and from such dues his company might hope to derive more profit than they could expect to do from a fixed sum paid by the Governments. He explained that his company had already made an offer to the Board of Trade to light the three island lights and the Mocha light for £10,000 a year. The Board of Trade would not forget this and, therefore, any sum fixed to cover the three island lights would probably leave the company no profit at all. Consequently, to make the new scheme acceptable to his directors and his shareholders, M. Cruppi would like the new agreement to be provisional in theory and to last until some arrangements were come to for the levy of light dues.

To this I said I did not think His Majesty's Government would object, but I explained in turn that the Board of Trade did not wish to leave the company with no profit at all. They were content that the company should have a profit, but it must be reasonable in amount and not such as to create a sense of grievance in the shipping world. Further I said it must be clearly understood that, if there were to be any negotiations in the future for the conclusion of an agreement for the levy of Red Sea light dues, the negotiations must be conducted by the French, i.e., by the company with the assistance of the French Government, not by His Majesty's Government, who would have no *locus standi* in the matter. M. Cruppi said he quite understood this.

As regards the Mocha light, I said that the present proposal only related to the island lights, but that, as soon as an agreement as to these had come into operation, we would do our best to help in securing an agreement as to the Mocha light, as His Majesty's Government would be glad to get that light restarted.

Beyond the above point it was not possible for me to carry the discussions without ascertaining that His Majesty's Government were prepared to proceed on the lines I have indicated. I may add, however, that M. Fromageot explained the scheme in outline to M. Berthelot, who thought it a reasonable proposal, though alive to the fact that, despite its reasonableness, it might not be easy to secure for it universal acceptance.

If the scheme is one which His Majesty's Government are prepared to endorse, an answer should be sent to the French Ambassador's last note, inviting the company to re-enter into possession of the Red Sea lights on the basis of the concession of 1899 as from the 1st April. If the company are not willing to do so, an offer should be made to the French Government to enter into a new agreement on the lines of the scheme arrived at in my discussions at Paris.

January 10, 1927.

No. 3.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir R. Graham (Rome).

(No. 9.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, January 11, 1927.

JEDDAH telegram No. 1 of 8th January: Agreement between Ibn Saud and Idriisi.

It would be well that you should communicate news of this agreement to the Italians, either directly or through Sir G. Clayton, as you think best.

While I had realised the possibility of some such arrangement, we had no previous knowledge of present agreement. Ibn Saud did not mention it to Mr. Jordan during his recent negotiations for revision of treaty. He did, however, ask that his title in preamble should include Asir, but when it was pointed out to him that this was impossible, Asir being an independent State under its own ruler, he vouchsafed no explanations and allowed the matter to drop.

No. 4.

Lord Lloyd to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received January 12.)(No. 7. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.)*Cairo, January 12, 1927.*

GOVERNOR of Eritrea lunched here a short time ago on his way through Cairo to attend Rome conference.

2. In the course of conversation he asked my opinion on question of Red Sea littoral. I replied I felt hardly competent to express any, the area being one with which I had no previous concern. I should, however, be much interested to hear his Excellency's own views.

3. Signor Gasparini did not hesitate to propound them. Great Britain, he said, had incomparably greater strength in the East than any other Power. But for that very reason she was suspect throughout Moslem world. To enable her to move forward she needed a stalking-horse. In Red Sea Italy was admirably placed to play that rôle. The Imam, for example, in whom Italy was especially interested, was a unique ruler in the sense that he had established rule without recourse to any European Power. To gain his sympathy would be of great value. For reasons outlined above England could hardly hope to achieve this, whereas Italy should be able to succeed with comparative facility, which, given a secret understanding between our two countries, would be the same thing. I returned a non-committal reply.

4. Major Vivian, who has just passed through Cairo, has since told me that he learns from a certain source that Signor Gasparini recently sent a number of sheikhs into Asir with explicit instructions to foment anti-British feeling; and that Italians hope by this means to secure withdrawal of concession recently given to Shell Oil group in Farsan Island.

(Repeated to Rome, No. 3.)

No. 5.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received January 12.)(No. 8.)
(Telegraphic.)*Rome, January 12, 1927.*

YOUR telegram No. 306.*

After General Clayton had been presented to Under-Secretary and Secretary-General conversations opened yesterday evening with Governor-General of Eritrea and Signor Guariglia.

General Clayton stated our views, and Commander Gasparini fenced at great length without clearly disclosing what Italians have in mind. But they appear for one thing to desire equalisation of commercial tariffs in Farsan Islands. Commander Gasparini informed us of treaty between Ibn Saud and Idrisi.

On one point Italians showed apprehensions which are possibly justified. General Clayton's arrival here is known, and so is return of Commander Gasparini at an unusual time. Italians fear light in which the press, especially the French and Egyptian, may present our conversations. Sinister designs for partitioning Arabia into spheres of influence may be attributed to us and may disturb great Arab chiefs. Further, the French might desire to participate. Italians think that it would be wise to prepare public opinion by discreet references to our conversations in the shape of articles in the Rome and London press, but not by inspired communiqué. They suggested that conversations should be described as purely economic, but to this we objected as not being in accordance with facts. Possibly we might describe them as relating solely to our mutual interests in the Red Sea. I should be grateful for your instructions on this subject.

If, as is likely, my French colleague comes to ask me what is on foot, I should propose to be perfectly frank with him.

* Part XIX, No. 62.

No. 6.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received January 13.)(No. 11.)
(Telegraphic.)*Rome, January 13, 1927.*

MY telegram No. 8.

At a further meeting yesterday evening Italians showed their hand. They are evidently much exercised over treaty between Ibn Saud and Said Idrisi, and suggest that we should not recognise, as it was preferable to have a buffer State separating Aden and Imam. They had, however, on previous day proposed to eliminate Said Idrisi as a mushroom chief of no importance. Italians recognised our vital interest in regard to Farsan Islands as affecting imperial communications, but said that vital interests of Eritrean colony would be equally affected by anything in the nature of a foreign naval base in islands. They had no political aims, but Eritrea was a poor colony which did not pay her way and economic development of islands was most important for her; oil was clearly alluded to; they did not recognise claim of Said Idrisi to sovereignty over the islands and supported that of Imam. We made it perfectly clear that in no circumstances could we accept control of islands passing into hands of either Italians or Imam. They further stated that local island chiefs would have nothing to do with Said Idrisi or recognise his right to islands. Signor Gasparini said that chiefs had repeatedly offered him oil exploitation concession in islands for a small consideration, but that he had always refused it out of regard for our feelings. A native Italian subject had, however, practically completed arrangements with local chiefs, which had been upset by concession now given to Asiatic Petroleum Company. I took this opportunity to make complaint regarding Italian intrigues as instructed in your telegram No. 7. Signor Gasparini was perfectly unabashed and said that Sheikh Abdullah Soheil was head of one of the three big families in the islands who would have nothing to do with Ibn Saud or Asiatic Petroleum Company. Signor Guariglia suggested that even if Asiatic Petroleum Company had obtained concession, and he reserved all rights as regards recognising it, might there not also be room for Italian interests in oil exploitation? The position clearly is that unless we let the Italians in on some footing or other as regards participation in oil interests they will do all they can to render the situation as difficult as possible. Nor do I think any official assurances I might extract from the Italian Government on the subject would control Signor Gasparini's local action. We are not sufficiently aware of local position to appreciate whether Asiatic Petroleum Company can afford to ignore this ramification of the question. If they can, so much the better; if not, it might be well to come to terms.

The Italians indicated that they intended to raise the question of Camaran Islands at a later stage, and we propose to concentrate on maintaining the existing arrangements, as we think it unlikely that anything better can be secured.

No. 7.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received January 14.)(No. 13.)
(Telegraphic.)*Rome, January 14, 1927.*

MY telegram No. 11.

After further conversations this morning which have made Italian point of view perfectly clear, General Clayton thinks, and I agree, that it would be best that he should return to London and lay the whole case before you. He might, if thought desirable, return, and we could then draw up an agreed record of results of our conversations. He would propose to have some further private discussions with Signor Gasparini and would leave on Monday if you approve.

No. 8.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir R. Graham (Rome).

(No. 15.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, January 15, 1927.

YOUR telegram No. 8 of 12th January: Conversations of Sir G. Clayton in Rome.

There is a good deal to be said in favour of Italian suggestion of endeavouring to prevent misconceptions regarding object and scope of the conversations in Rome. I approve, therefore, of your proposal to be perfectly frank with your French colleague if approached by him, and similar attitude will be adopted here if French Ambassador alludes to the conversations.

Press here will be kept informed on lines suggested in your telegram.

(Confidential.)

Further point for consideration is desirability of informing Ibn Saud of the conversations in Rome, and on this I will telegraph again after consulting Mr. Jordan, who recently arrived in this country.

Your telegrams Nos. 11 and 13 of 13th and 14th January have since arrived.

I approve Sir G. Clayton's proposal to leave Rome 17th January.

[E 284/22/91]

No. 9.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received January 17.)

(No. 22.)

Sir,

Rome, January 8, 1927.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 856 of the 8th October last, I have the honour to report that a statement is published in the Italian press of to-day to the effect that the Imam of the Yemen has ratified the Treaty of Friendship and Commerce concluded between Italy and the Yemen on the 2nd September, 1926.

2. I will report further so soon as any official announcement is made as regards the ratification of this treaty.

I have, &c.

R. GRAHAM.

[E 266/22/91]

No. 10.

Notes of Meetings held in the Palazzo Chigi.—(Communicated to Foreign Office by Sir G. Clayton, January 17.)

(1.)

First Meeting, January 11, 1927, at 5 P.M.

Present:

The Right Hon. Sir R. Graham, G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., C.B.

Sir Gilbert Clayton, K.C.M.G., K.B.E., C.B.

Signor Guariglia.

Signor Gasparini.

SIR RONALD GRAHAM opened the proceedings by asking Sir Gilbert Clayton to give a brief résumé of the instructions which he had received for the conduct of these conversations.

SIR GILBERT CLAYTON enumerated the chief points of his instructions, drawing special attention to the desire of His Majesty's Government to enter into frank conversations in regard to questions connected with the Red Sea in order that possible future misunderstandings and complications might be avoided. He also stated the policy of His Majesty's Government in the Red Sea as being governed

primarily by the necessity of securing imperial communications with India, for which purpose it was of vital imperial interest to Great Britain that no European Power should establish itself on the Arabian shore of the Red Sea, and more particularly on the Kamaran or the Farsan Islands; and, similarly, that neither Kamaran nor the Farsan Islands should fall into the hands of an unfriendly Arab ruler. He emphasised that, apart from this principle, His Majesty's Government had no political ambition, and that, so far as commercial and economic matters were concerned, they were in favour of equality of opportunity throughout the area concerned. Sir Gilbert Clayton then sketched briefly the relations between His Majesty's Government and the three principal Arab rulers, namely, the Imam of the Yemen, Ibn Saud and the Idrisi of the Asir, and stated that the policy of His Majesty's Government towards these rulers was one of friendship and that they were anxious to solve any questions which might be outstanding or which might arise with them in a friendly manner if possible. Sir Gilbert Clayton also alluded to the hope of His Majesty's Government that the Italian authorities, who had now established friendly relations with the Imam of the Yemen, might be able, by their counsels to the Imam, to assist in a satisfactory and peaceable solution of the difficulties which at present existed between him and the British authorities in Aden.

In conclusion, Sir Gilbert Clayton drew attention to an aspect of the question which His Majesty's Government considered of importance, namely, the danger that the conflict between the Imam Yahya and the Idrisi, possibly supported by Ibn Saud, might lead to misunderstandings and difficulties between the Italian and British Governments, in view of the fact that the Italian Government had concluded a treaty of friendship with the Imam of the Yemen, while, on the other hand, His Majesty's Government were in treaty relations with the Idrisi, who was at the present moment the possessor of the Farsan Islands, to the status of which, as indicated above, His Majesty's Government attached great importance.

SIGNOR GASPARINI replied, saying that he felt sure that it should be possible to promote full and frank co-operation between Italy and Great Britain in the area concerned, and expressed the view that their respective interests were not incompatible the one with the other. He then spoke at considerable length on the general situation in Arabia and gave some account of various conversations which he had had with the Imam in the course of his recent mission to Sanaa.

SIGNOR GUARIGLIA supported Signor Gasparini's view that there appeared no reason why British and Italian interests should conflict in the Red Sea, making the somewhat significant observation that in regard to the Farsan Islands, for example, British interests were predominantly political as affecting liberty and security of communication through the Red Sea, whereas Italian interests were purely commercial and connected with the economic expansion of their Colony of Eritrea.

SIGNOR GASPARINI then discussed the status of the Idrisi, pointing out that he was more or less an upstart and newcomer in Arabia and had no tradition behind him; it was therefore easy to understand that the Imam of the Yemen, who had never recognised him, should feel himself entitled to recover territory which he held to be an integral part of his original dominions. He went on to point out that the Imam was in a somewhat difficult position, being hedged round by semi-hostile forces in the shape of the frontier tribesmen of the Aden Protectorate, the Zaranik tribesmen on the coast (who had always been truculent and impatient of any outside domination), and the Idrisi, with whom he had for long been on terms of enmity; he therefore was not entirely without justification when he became alarmed and suspicious at seeing the Aden tribes supplied with munitions by the Resident, and, recently, the Idrisi receiving munitions from British sources.

Both SIR RONALD GRAHAM and SIR GILBERT CLAYTON pointed out in reply to this that it must not be forgotten that the Imam was the aggressor, both in the case of the Aden Protectorate and that of the Asir, and that he could therefore hardly complain if his enemies received a moderate amount of material with which to defend themselves against his incursions, especially as he himself was in a very much stronger position as regards war material and means of obtaining it.

SIGNOR GASPARINI then developed his argument in a direction which gave the impression that he was suggesting the elimination of the Idrisi and the division of his territory between the Imam and Ibn Saud, the greater portion to fall to the Imam, including the Farsan Islands.

[16696]

E 4

When it was pointed out that Great Britain was under certain treaty obligations to the Idrisi and could not view with indifference his complete extinction, SIGNOR GUARIGLIA intervened and said that he thought that both Governments were agreed that it was desirable to maintain the Idrisi as a buffer State between the two great Arab rulers.

Note.—It should be mentioned that Signor Gasparini had already informed the meeting that the Italian Government had received news of an agreement concluded between Ibn Saud and the Idrisi by which the former was to assume the protection of the Asir.

At an early stage in the proceedings the Italian representatives raised the point of the necessity of ensuring that a correct statement in regard to these conversations appeared in the press. They were apprehensive that unless steps were taken to ensure this, false impressions might be created, especially in Paris and Egypt. They were afraid lest it might be inferred that some general and far-reaching agreement was about to be concluded in regard to the Red Sea area as a whole, which would perhaps disturb the French Government by an idea that they were being left out of conversations on questions in which they were interested, and would certainly give rise in Arabia, probably through the medium of the Cairo press, to inaccurate rumours which would alarm the various Arab rulers concerned, and, by rousing their suspicions, make them exceedingly difficult to deal with.

SIR RONALD GRAHAM said that he would telegraph to London on this point in order that the necessary steps might be considered with a view to putting the right complexion on these conversations in the English press.

(The meeting then adjourned until the following day.)

(2.)

Second Meeting, January 12, 1927, at 5-30 P.M.

SIR RONALD GRAHAM informed the Italian representatives that he had just received a telegram from His Majesty's Government informing him of the conclusion of an agreement between Ibn Saud and the Idrisi, by which the former assumed a protectorate over Asir in so far as foreign relations were concerned and the granting of concessions to foreign subjects.

THE ITALIAN REPRESENTATIVES, who had received information on this subject, seemed somewhat disturbed at the change in the situation which this agreement had produced, and stated that it appeared to them that the whole question had assumed a somewhat different complexion. They were anxious to know whether His Majesty's Government would recognise the agreement, and appeared to think that such action would make matters more difficult for them. It was not, of course, possible to give them any reply on this subject, though it seems probable that Ibn Saud will raise the question with some energy in the course of his conversations with Mr. Jordan, and doubtless hopes to obtain British recognition of his new acquisition.

SIGNOR GUARIGLIA observed that this new development put an end to any idea of a buffer State between Ibn Saud and the Imam, and that the question had therefore become one of a direct issue between those two rulers.

It was pointed out to the Italian representatives that no change was involved in the attitude of His Majesty's Government, which had already been clearly stated, and that the new arrangement made it still more improbable that the Imam could have any success in the direction of the Farsan Islands, as he would now not only be up against the Idrisi, but also against Ibn Saud.

It now appeared opportune to ascertain by a direct question what were the actual interests of Eritrea in the Farsan Islands, to which the Italian Government attached such importance.

THE ITALIAN REPRESENTATIVES in reply stated that they fully recognised British interests in the Farsan Islands as already stated to them, but that the Italian Government, on their part, would only view with apprehension the

establishment of a base by any foreign Power in those islands. Further, they pointed out that Eritrea was a small and struggling colony which was not self-supporting and had but few outlets, and that therefore commercial relations with the Farsan Islands, which lay immediately opposite the port of Massawa, were a vital interest to the progress and prosperity of the colony.

SIGNOR GASPARINI pointed out that, in view of the geographical position, relations between the islands and Massawa were close and continuous. He stated that the local chiefs and other inhabitants were frequent visitors to Eritrea and that he could at any time have obtained a concession for the oil on the Farsan Islands from the local chiefs for a small consideration, but had hitherto avoided encouraging any offers in this direction. At the same time an Arab sheikh at Massawa had been for a considerable period in negotiation with local chiefs of Farsan, and had, in fact, almost completed arrangements for an oil concession when the action of the Shell Company had dashed his hopes to the ground.

SIR RONALD GRAHAM took this opportunity of informing the Italian representatives of the substance of a telegram which he had just received from London on the subject of Italian intrigues against the agents of the Shell Company, who were endeavouring to carry out investigations in regard to the possibility of finding oil in the Farsan Islands.

SIGNOR GASPARINI, however, did not appear much disturbed by this communication, which he brushed aside as of little consequence, and proceeded to insist that the local chiefs on Farsan had never recognised the authority of the Idrisi, and denied his right to dispose of any concessions in the islands, which belonged to them, and indicated fairly clearly that the Italian authorities, at least on the spot, were inclined to support this contention.

In reply to this argument the British point of view was again made clear, to the effect that His Majesty's Government could not tolerate the establishment of any foreign Power in the Farsan Islands, or their annexation by any Arabian ruler who was on unfriendly terms with Great Britain.

SIGNOR GASPARINI then asked whether it was in the true interests of Great Britain to maintain this attitude against the Imam and thereby increase the difficulties of the situation as between him and His Majesty's Government. The Yemen, by reason of its remote and inaccessible situation, was well adapted for a Moslem centre of activity which might well attract various elements hostile to Great Britain; it would surely therefore be a wiser policy to secure the friendly co-operation of the Imam by viewing his aspirations with a more favourable eye.

SIGNOR GUARIGLIA continued on the same lines and asked whether, in the event of friendly relations being established in the future between His Majesty's Government and the Imam, it would still be considered that his possession of the Farsan Islands was contrary to the interests of British policy.

The reply to this was that it was impossible to say what might happen should a complete change take place in the situation in that part of Arabia, but that as matters stood to-day His Majesty's Government were bound to consider the Farsan Islands as a portion of the Idrisi's dominions and could not envisage their annexation by the Imam, who was at the present moment pursuing a policy contrary to British interests.

SIGNOR GUARIGLIA then observed that of course the Italian Government fully recognised British interests in this question and were no doubt prepared to give any guarantee which might be necessary to ensure that they were safeguarded.

To this SIR RONALD GRAHAM replied that, while entirely confident in the full and complete friendship which existed between the two countries to-day, we had to look to the future and provide for the possibility—he hoped and fully believed, a remote one—of a change in the general political situation. The British Admiralty attached the very greatest importance to this question, and would never give way in a matter which concerned vitally one of the links in the chain of British imperial communications in the East.

SIGNOR GUARIGLIA then suggested another meeting, as there were several other matters which required discussion, among which he specifically mentioned Kamaran.

Third Meeting, January 14, 1927, at 10-30 P.M.

SIGNOR GASPARINI read out the text of the telegram which had been received from Eritrea giving in detail the articles of the treaty recently concluded between Ibn Saud and the Idrisi, as given in "El Kora," the local newspaper of Mecca. The main points of the articles were:—

1. Suzerainty of Ibn Saud over the territories of the Asir as existing in 1921 (N.B.—This would seem to include Hodeida in Asir for purposes of the treaty.)
2. Control by Ibn Saud of the foreign policy of the Asir.
3. No concessions in Asir to be given to foreigners without the sanction of Ibn Saud.
4. Ibn Saud to have the deciding word as regards the making of peace or war.
5. No cession of territory in Asir to be made without the sanction of Ibn Saud.
6. Ibn Saud to extend his protection over the territories of Asir, as defined in article 1.
7. The Idrisi to have complete autonomy as regards interior administration.
8. The Sharai Law to run through the territories of Asir.

THE ITALIAN REPRESENTATIVES expressed once more considerable anxiety lest His Majesty's Government should recognise this treaty, which they maintained would mean definitely taking sides with Ibn Saud against the Imam Yahya, and thereby complicating the situation and completely alienating the Imam. They said that Italy in no case could recognise this treaty, in view of the relations which they had now established with Yemen. If Great Britain recognised it, therefore, the situation as between the British and Italian Governments would be greatly complicated and the possibility of promoting an amicable arrangement between Ibn Saud and the Imam Yahya would be rendered more remote.

SIGNOR GUARIGLIA then brought the conversation back to the question of the Farsan Islands, and more particularly to that of the concession granted by the Idrisi to the Asiatic Petroleum Company.

SIGNOR GASPARINI maintained that he had not given any official support to the Italian subject at Messawa, who was in negotiation with the local chiefs of Farsan, but that, of course, his administration could not but view their efforts with sympathy and regret that the concession should fall into other hands.

SIR GILBERT CLAYTON observed that His Majesty's Government could not well prevent the Shell Company from attempting to obtain confirmation of their concession from Ibn Saud, who, under the terms of the new treaty, would doubtless be the governing authority, in spite of anything which the local chiefs on the island might say.

SIGNOR GUARIGLIA then asked whether His Majesty's Government were definitely supporting the Asiatic Petroleum Company, and whether they did not agree that both Governments should take no part in this question and let the various would-be concessionaires fight it out amongst themselves.

He repeated that the Italian point of view was that the British and Italian Governments, while each pursuing their policy independently, should work on parallel lines, and thus avoid any conflict in an area in which it was most desirable that there should be no conflict between them. If this policy were agreed upon, it was all the more necessary, in view of possible future developments, to clear up outstanding questions, such as that of the Farsan Islands, and thus avoid the danger of any difference of opinion being taken advantage of by those who thought it to their interest to sow seeds of discord between the two Governments.

SIGNOR GUARIGLIA then stated that the remaining specific questions to be discussed were:—

1. *The Akaba-Maan Frontier between Transjordan and the Hejaz.*

The Italian point of view was that Great Britain, as mandatory power for Transjordan, could not dispose of mandated territory which had been committed to it by the League of Nations without the consent and approval of that body.

Although this question did not directly enter into the scope of the conversations which were now taking place, he wished to point out that Italy was interested in this frontier question from the point of view which he had put forward.

(N.B.—It appeared that the Italians were anxious lest our frontier negotiations with Ibn Saud in this area should result in an increase in the Hejaz territory at the expense of Transjordan.)

2. *The Suakin-Jeddah Telegraph Cable.*

Signor Guariglia sketched briefly the Italian point of view in regard to this question, but Sir Ronald Graham interposed and stated that he considered it outside the scope of our conversations. Discussion on this point was therefore not proceeded with.

3. *Kamran.*

Signor Guariglia asked what the British Government held to be the juridical position in regard to Kamran Island, and fortunately the necessity of replying to this somewhat embarrassing question was averted by Signor Gasparini, who interposed and asked what the actual arrangements were in regard to the administration of Kamran, and more especially of the quarantine station on the island. He pointed out that Kamran Island lay immediately opposite the territories which were in the possession of the Imam Yahya, and that they should technically be held, therefore, to belong to the Yemen. He said that the Italian Government had considerable interest in the question, as their pilgrims from Italian Somaliland had to pass through the quarantine station.

SIR GILBERT CLAYTON gave a brief account of the arrangements now in force under the Anglo-Dutch Agreement for the administration of the quarantine station, and described the general conditions prevailing on the islands, which, he pointed out, was practically uninhabited except for a small and fluctuating population engaged in the pearl-fishing industry.

SIGNOR GUARIGLIA then said that the Italian Government were not anxious to press for any change of status in regard to Kamran, and that it was better to leave it as it was at present, and not to raise the question. On the other hand, the Italian Government felt that they had a right to some participation in the medical direction of the quarantine station; they had had an Italian doctor there before the war when the quarantine station was in Turkish territory, and they thought it only proper that this privilege should be restored. Moreover, such participation would be evidence of co-operation between the two Governments and would assist the Italian Government in dealing with the Imam Yahya, who undoubtedly might at any time put forward strong claims to possession. Sir Gilbert Clayton asked what proportion of the total pilgrims passing through Kamran came from Italian colonies, to which Signor Gasparini replied that it was impossible to say, and depended on the local situation at the moment; if there were disturbances of any sort in the colonies the number of pilgrims naturally decreased below that obtaining in normal years.

SIR RONALD GRAHAM then pointed out in connection with this question that any participation by the Italians would not improbably lead to demands from the French for similar treatment.

In conclusion, it was agreed that these conversations had been extremely useful in clarifying the situation and setting forth clearly the aims and views of both parties. Sir Ronald Graham added that Sir Gilbert Clayton, on his return to London, would now be in a position to explain the Italian point of view fully to His Majesty's Government.

Private Conversation between Signor Gasparini and Sir Gilbert Clayton at the Ministry of the Colonies, Rome, on the morning of January 15, 1927.

SIR GILBERT CLAYTON informed Signor Gasparini that the Ambassador and he were of opinion that the conversations had now reached a stage at which it

was desirable that Sir Gilbert Clayton should return to London, especially in view of the change in the situation which had been produced by the recent treaty between Ibn Saud and the Idrisi, to which the Italian Government appeared to attach extreme importance. Sir Gilbert Clayton could, if thought advisable, return shortly to Rome, when an agreed record of the conversations which had taken place could be drawn up. The discussions which had taken place had, in any case, been most useful in clarifying the situation and exposing the respective points of view of the two Governments.

SIGNOR GASPARINI agreed entirely with this point of view, and reiterated the concern with which his Government regarded the situation as created by the recent treaty. He again emphasised the unfortunate effect which recognition of this treaty by His Majesty's Government would have upon the Imam of the Yemen, and gave it as his opinion that it would definitely alienate him from Great Britain and throw him into the arms of various influences which were hostile to British policy, and which were already seeking in him an instrument of anti-British policy. He urged once more the necessity of solving any outstanding questions between the British and Italian Governments which might stand in the way of a policy of full co-operation on parallel lines. He instanced certain cases which had come to his notice of efforts by subversive elements to establish an influence with the Imam; notably the case of a mission which had recently proceeded from Sanaa to Constantinople and which had, as he was informed, stopped at Jeddah *en route* and held long conversations with the Turkish representative there, in which M. Akhimof, the Soviet representative, had taken part. He felt that it was imperative to look ahead and to establish a solid front against intrigues such as were only too evident in China and elsewhere, and he regarded Sanaa as a very important centre in this respect.

He expressed some surprise that Ibn Saud should have entered into an arrangement of this nature with the Idrisi, with whom he was well aware Great Britain had a treaty, at a time when he was actually engaged in negotiations with a British representative for the conclusion of a general treaty, and inferred that Ibn Saud had been guilty at least of a lack of courtesy and of frankness in this matter.

In conclusion, Signor Gasparini expressed the hope that Sir Gilbert Clayton would be able to return to Rome before his own departure to Eritrea. He had arranged to receive Lord Lloyd, who contemplated travelling to the Sudan via Eritrea towards the middle of February, so that he would have to leave Italy for Eritrea by the 1st February at latest.

[E 392/22/91]

No. 11.

Consul Mayers to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 3.)

Sir,

Jeddah, January 8, 1927.

IN continuation of my telegram No. 1 of to-day's date, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith translation of the agreement arrived at between the King of the Hejaz and the Idrisi Sayed Hassan on the 21st October last which has been published in the official newspaper "Umm-el-Qura," of yesterday, under the name of the "Mecca Agreement."

2. Ibn Saud's attitude to Asir is now definitely made clear. I venture, however, to postpone comment on the new convention until I have obtained some indication as to exactly what territories and boundaries are referred to in article 1.

3. I am forwarding copy of this despatch to the political resident at Aden.

I have, &c.

NORMAN MAYERS.

Enclosure in No. 11.

The Mecca Agreement.

Praise be to God alone!

(Translation.)

BETWEEN the King of the Hejaz, Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies, and the Imam Sayed-el-Hassan-bin-ali-el-Idrisi. With a view to the unity of the word, to the

preservation of the existence of the Arab countries, and to the consolidation of relations between the princes of the Arab peninsula, the following agreement has been reached between His Majesty the King of the Hejaz, Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies, Abdul-Aziz-bin-Abdul-Rahman Al Faisal-Al-Saud and his Lordship the Imam of Asir the Sayed-el-Hassan-bin-Ali-el-Idrisi:—

ARTICLE 1.

His Lordship the Imam, Sayed-el-Hassan-bin-Ali-el-Idrisi, recognises by this agreement [the territories bounded by?] the ancient frontiers mentioned in the agreement of the 10th Safar, 1339, made between the Sultan of Nejd and the Imam, Sayed Mohammed-bin-Ali-el-Idrisi, and which were, at that date, subject to the Idrisis, as being under the suzerainty of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz, Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies.

ARTICLE 2.

The Imam of Asir may not enter into political negotiations with any Government nor grant any economic concessions to any person except with the sanction of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz, Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies.

ARTICLE 3.

The Imam of Asir may not declare war or make peace except with the sanction of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz, Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies.

ARTICLE 4.

The Imam of Asir may not cede any part of the territories of Asir defined in article 1.

ARTICLE 5.

The King of the Hejaz, Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies, recognises the present Imam of Asir as ruler during his lifetime of the territories defined in article 1, and thereafter (as ruler) whomsoever the Idrisis and the competent authorities of the Imamate may nominate.

ARTICLE 6.

The King of the Hejaz, Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies, agrees that the internal administration of Asir, the regulation of its tribal affairs, appointments, dismissals and so on, appertain to the rights of the Imam of Asir provided such administration is in harmony with Sharia law and justice, as is the case in the two Governments [Nejd and Hejaz?].

ARTICLE 7.

The King of the Hejaz, Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies, undertakes to defend from internal and external aggression the territories of Asir as defined in article 1. He will do so by agreement between the two contracting parties as circumstances and interest may necessitate.

ARTICLE 8.

Both parties promise to adhere to this agreement and to carry out its obligations.

ARTICLE 9.

This agreement will be effective after ratification by the two high contracting parties.

ARTICLE 10.

This agreement has been drawn up in Arabic in two copies, of which one will be kept by each of the two contracting parties.

ARTICLE 11.

This agreement will be known as the Mecca Agreement.

Signed on Rabi Akhar the 14th, 1345 (October 21, 1926).

The King of the Hejaz, Sultan of
Nejd and its Dependencies :
(Royal Seal) ABDUL-AZIZ-BIN-ABDUL-RAHMAN-
AL-FAISAL-AL-SAUD,
The Imam of Asir :
(Official Seal) EL-HASSAN-BIN-ALI-EL-IDRISI.

In the presence of the writer,
the Servant of Islam :
(Seal) AHMED-EL-SHERIF-EL-SENUSI.

[E 477/119/91]

No. 12.

Consul S. R. Jordan and Mr. G. Antonius to Sir Austen Chamberlain.

Sir,
London, January 26, 1927.
WE have the honour to submit this report on the progress of the negotiations which we were appointed to conduct with His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd. As will be seen, these negotiations, far from reaching finality, led to a situation in which we felt it our duty to propose to Ibn Sa'ud that our conversations be temporarily suspended, pending reference to His Majesty's Government. For although agreement had been reached on the principles underlying the treaty which it was our task to conclude, yet our discussions had revealed some considerable divergence on specific points between the views of the King of the Hejaz and the policy laid down by His Majesty's Government. We have endeavoured in the present report to show the measure of that divergence by indicating, as briefly as is compatible with a clear exposition of the principles involved, the degree of agreement or of difference which was reached on each of the questions discussed.

2. We left Jedda on the morning of Monday, the 23rd November, 1926, in a convoy of motor-cars provided by the King. We spent the first night of the journey at Rabegh and the second at Bir Darwish, a caravan halting-place on the traditional pilgrim-route from Yambo to Medina. At midday on the 24th we reached the camp which had been prepared for us at Hamra Namleh, an uninhabited locality on the banks of the historic Wadi al-'Aqiq, some 14 miles to the south-west of Medina. There we remained until Wednesday, the 15th December, when we started back for Jedda, arriving there late on the following night. Negotiations were opened on the day of our arrival in the camp, and during the three weeks of our stay we held thirteen formal meetings with the King. A still larger number of meetings were held with Dr. Abdullah Damluji and Shaikh Yusuf Yasin, who had been chosen by the King as his immediate assistants for the purposes of the negotiations.

3. Alongside with these conversations there took place a reciprocal exchange of specific proposals in the form of written drafts, of which we submit copies or translations herewith (Annexes 1 to 6),* and which may be scheduled in chronological order as follows:—

- (a.) Hejaz first Draft Treaty (with Protocol relating to the Hejaz Railway), presented on the 25th November (Annex 1).*
- (b.) Our first Draft Treaty, with Protocol relating to the Hejaz-Transjordan frontier (as enclosed in Foreign Office despatch No. 126 of the 3rd November), presented on the 26th November (Annex 2).*
- (c.) Hejaz second Draft Treaty, presented on the 27th November (Annex 3).*
- (d.) Our second Draft Treaty (with Protocol relating to the Hejaz-Transjordan frontier), presented on the 4th December (Annex 4).*
- (e.) Hejaz third Draft Treaty, presented on the 4th December (Annex 5).
- (f.) Draft undertaking relating to the Hejaz-Transjordan frontier and to His Britannic Majesty's special position in mandated territories, presented by Ibn Sa'ud on the 7th December (Annex 6).

* Annexes 1, 3 and 4 not printed; for Annex 2 see Part XIX, No. 50 (Enclosure 1).

It should be noted that the above communications were all presented unsigned.
4. We propose in this report to separate the questions which we had occasion to discuss with the King of the Hejaz into two categories:—

- (a.) Points proposed by His Majesty's Government in the Draft Treaty and Protocol issued under cover of Foreign Office despatch No. 126 of the 3rd November, 1926.
- (b.) Points proposed by the King of the Hejaz for inclusion in the treaty.

With regard to (a), the Draft Treaty which consists of a Preamble and eight articles, and the Protocol which is a separate one-clause instrument are both dealt with, point by point, in paragraphs 5 to 14 below; while the questions under (b), which are four in number, are dealt with in paragraphs 15 to 18.

The third section of our report, paragraphs 19 to 23, will deal with our conclusions and general observations.

(a.) *Points proposed by His Majesty's Government.*

5. *Preamble.*—The wording of the Preamble was not questioned, but was accepted by Ibn Sa'ud with evident appreciation. He proposed, however, two inessential modifications. The first was to provide that his son, the Amir Faisal, should sign the Treaty as Plenipotentiary on his behalf, to which we naturally consented. The second was that, in the Preamble and throughout the Treaty, he should be styled "King of the Hejaz and Nejd and their Dependencies" instead of "King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies." To this proposal we objected, pointing out to Ibn Sa'ud that, although the conversion of the sultanate of Nejd into a kingdom was a matter on which we did not presume to offer an opinion, it would be preferable if this change and the consequent modification of the title, when made, were notified to His Majesty's Government, in accordance with the procedure usually adopted in such matters. Ibn Sa'ud subsequently withdrew his proposal.

6. *Article 1.*—The general stipulation for peace and friendship was accepted by Ibn Sa'ud without demur, but there was some discussion about the second sentence of the article. Ibn Sa'ud declared himself in favour of the deletion of the words—
"to use all possible means to prevent his territory being used as a base for activities directed against the present or future interests of the other."

He maintained that the undertaking implied in those words was of a somewhat far-reaching character, and that, in practice, it would be difficult for either Government to abide by it without resorting to exceptional and possibly tyrannical measures. He also declared that the general stipulation for peace and friendship contained in the first sentence was, in his opinion, adequate to the end in view; but if an amplifying sentence was desired, he suggested a clause to the following effect:—

"to use all the means at his disposal to maintain *bon voisinage* and good relations between the territories of the high contracting parties."

We thought it preferable to adhere to the original clause, and we informed Ibn Sa'ud that his alternative clause, although it was in consonance with the spirit of the article, did not seem to us to convey the intended meaning, which was that each Government should take in its own territories what measures it could, within the law, to prevent hostile activities being aimed at the other. In our endeavour to meet Ibn Sa'ud's objections, we offered to insert a qualification which should restrict the scope of the measures to be taken by each Government, and we put forward the following alternative wording:—

"to maintain good relations with the other, and to endeavour by all the means at his disposal to prevent his territories being used as a base for unlawful activities directed against the interests of the other."

This text, except for an inessential modification of the wording, was accepted by Ibn Sa'ud in his third draft.

7. *Article 2.*—Save for a conditional acceptance at the outset of the negotiations, Ibn Sa'ud steadfastly withheld his assent to this article. He took pains to persuade us that his refusal was not motivated by any unwillingness to accept the existing state of affairs in mandated territories. He maintained that, on the

contrary, the conclusion of the Hadda and Bahra Agreements was tantamount to a definite recognition of the British position in those territories; and that he, for his part, had no intention of questioning that position. On the other hand, he felt unable to accept the proposed article. He argued that the formal recognition it contained would inevitably be associated in the minds of people with the controversy relating to the pledges given to the Sharif Husain in 1915—a controversy to which he had never been party and into which he had no desire to be drawn. He asked with some vehemence that this article be not pressed upon him, in view both of the embarrassment it would cause him and of the fact that, for all practical purposes, the British position in mandated territories had been recognised by him elsewhere.

8. *Article 3.*—On this point agreement was virtually reached before the suspension of the negotiations. The main difficulty lay in Ibn Sa'ud's desire to insert a qualification restricting the protection of pilgrims to those who performed it "in accordance with Shar'ia laws and ordinances" (see Annex 3, article 3).^{*} We felt it necessary to reject this provision. The question of the interpretation of Shar'ia law is one over which, since the advent of Wahabi rule in the Hejaz, the minds of the Moslem world have been considerably exercised. The Wahabi interpretation, which is the only one that Ibn Sa'ud is disposed or, indeed, able to apply, has by no means been generally accepted, even in the orthodox sections of Islam; while in some quarters, notably in certain parts of India and of Iraq, it is hotly denounced. It seemed to us that the acceptance by His Majesty's Government of the proposed qualification, which at first sight may appear a proper and harmless one, might be represented as an attempt to uphold Wahabi as against non-Wahabi tenets. The objections are manifest, and we explained them to Ibn Sa'ud in the clearest terms. His third and last draft of the treaty did, it is true, contain that qualification; but he gave us to understand later on in our conversations that he would be prepared to omit it if agreement on the outstanding points were to be reached.

A second modification, which seemed to us acceptable, was proposed by Ibn Sa'ud, to the effect that the facilities and protection offered to British pilgrims would be "to the same extent" as would be offered to all other pilgrims. His object in inserting this modification was, while retaining most-favoured-nation principles, to remove all implication of preferential treatment.

9. *Article 4.*—There was no difference of opinion on the principle of this article, of which the purport is to consecrate the existing practice relating to the belongings of pilgrims who die in the Hejaz. Ibn Sa'ud declared that he was in agreement with that principle, but that he preferred to modify the wording of our text in such a way as to make it conform still more explicitly with current procedure. Moreover, he added a qualification to the effect that the provisions of this article would apply only in the case of those pilgrims who have no legal trustee in the Hejaz at the time of their death. We were satisfied that this stipulation is rendered necessary by the requirements of Moslem religious procedure, and we saw no reason for opposing it.

10. *Article 5.*—The contents of this article proved one of the main obstacles to the conclusion of a treaty. We are of opinion that the difficulty lay mainly in the fact that the conception of "national status" was one with which neither Ibn Sa'ud nor his advisers had had any previous acquaintance. Difficulties of that nature are not easily surmountable. We endeavoured to the best of our ability to explain to them the true connotation of the term, and to persuade them that the reciprocal recognition contained in this article was a matter of established usage which the recent change of régime in the Hejaz rendered necessary, and, in the interests of the Hejaz itself, particularly desirable. Ibn Sa'ud's objections were based on the fear that this article might be interpreted as a veiled reassertion of the validity of the Capitulations. Of this fear we were not successful in disabusing him. He declared that he could not consent to the inclusion of this article in the treaty unless a clause were added, stipulating that the subjects of either State would, while residing in the territories of the other State, be subject to local laws and tribunals. Alternatively, he proposed, if we could not see our way to accepting his stipulation, that the article be entirely deleted.

It was clearly beyond our powers to assent to the former alternative which seemed to us equivalent to the surrender of the juridical privileges contained in the Capitulations. Although we feel that the abolition of British capitulatory rights in Ibn Sa'ud's dominions is a matter which we wish to commend to the consideration

^{*} Not printed.

of His Majesty's Government, yet our only course was to resist any attempt on Ibn Sa'ud's part in that direction. With regard to his second alternative, we refrained from expressing a final opinion so long as several other questions remained unsettled.

11. *Article 6.*—From the outset, Ibn Sa'ud declared his readiness to include in the treaty an undertaking in the sense of this article, but he asked for a modification of the wording proposed by us. He was reluctant to accept the phrase "to refrain from all aggression or interference" on the general grounds that it was not compatible with his dignity as an independent ruler, and, more particularly, because the term "interference" seemed to him to be capable of too wide an interpretation. He suggested the alternative wording which figures in article 6 of his second draft (Annex 3),^{*} and in which he undertakes "to maintain relations of friendship and concord" with the Chiefs in question. To this text we brought a modification which made it read "to maintain relations of friendship and peace," and we informed Ibn Sa'ud that, subject to agreement being arrived at on the questions still outstanding, we were prepared to adopt that wording.

12. *Article 7.*—No agreement was reached or seemed likely to be reached on this question. As regards the first part of the article, which provides for Ibn Sa'ud's co-operation in the suppression of the slave trade, no difficulty was encountered for Ibn Sa'ud declared himself from the outset to be willing to take effective measures towards the suppression of that traffic. He stated that he fully appreciated the humanitarian motives which prompted His Majesty's Government to press for the inclusion of this article, and that he was himself impelled to the same end by the dictates of his religion. But on the second part of the article, which provides for the British consul's right of manumission, no agreement was reached. Ibn Sa'ud declared that he was unable, as an independent ruler, to recognise consular manumission as of right. He was willing, in the particular case of the British consul, to admit the existing practice of manumission, but only on the twofold understanding that:—

- (a.) This practice would be regarded as a matter of mutual agreement and not of acquired right.
- (b.) The British consular authority would be required to give adequate compensation to the owners of liberated slaves.

In support of the second stipulation, Ibn Sa'ud contended that, since the practice of buying and owning slaves had long been permitted and exercised under both the Turkish and the Hashimite régimes, it did not seem to him politic or equitable to legislate for the immediate abolition of slavery without providing adequate compensation to the owners of slaves for the economic loss which they would sustain from the liberation of their slaves.

We gave Ibn Sa'ud to understand that this question was one to which His Majesty's Government attached so much importance that we were precluded by our instructions from consenting to any alteration in the text of the article which we had presented to him. In view of his insistence, however, we took the step of referring the matter by telegraph to the Secretary of State.

13. *Article 8.*—This article, which is mainly formal, gave rise to no controversy except on the point of language and the relative validity of the English and the Arabic texts. This point was subsequently settled in the sense required by His Majesty's Government. In response to Ibn Sa'ud's request, we agreed to devote a separate article to the cancellation of the 1915 Treaty, and to delete the second section of the present article, namely, the section relating to the number and the mode of disposal of the quadruplicate copies of the proposed treaty.

14. *Protocol.*—We were unable to secure Ibn Sa'ud's assent to the terms of this Protocol. In his second draft (Annex 3)^{*} he had presented a request for the handing over to the Hejaz of the Ma'an-Akaba district. We found it necessary then to explain to him in unmistakable terms what the views of His Majesty's Government on that question were, and he thereupon withdrew his request. While maintaining a definitely contentious attitude, he asked us to drop the subject altogether. He declared that the question of the Hejaz-Transjordan frontier was exciting grave concern in the Moslem world; that it had been seized upon in inimical quarters as a weapon for agitation against him; and that his enemies, who were also those of Great Britain, were busy spreading the rumour that he was about to cede a portion of the Holy Land of Islam to his British allies.

^{*} Not printed.

Although we made a point throughout our conversations of refraining from entering into a detailed discussion of the subject, yet we thought it advisable, in order to restore the question to its proper perspective, to enumerate to Ibn Sa'ud the arguments in support of the claim of Transjordan to the Ma'an-Akaba district. There came a point in the discussion when Ibn Sa'ud seemed silenced by the arguments. However that may be, the fact is that he thenceforth abandoned his attitude of contentiousness and adopted a more conciliatory tone. He asked us with marked earnestness, and in the name of his friendship with Great Britain, not to force his hand. He felt very strongly that the moment was unpropitious for the settlement of this question, and that it was in the interests of both parties to postpone the fixation of the frontier to a more favourable opportunity. He ended by stating that he was prepared to pledge his word of honour that, until a settlement had been reached, he would not raise the subject or question the occupation and administration of that district by the officers of His Majesty's Government.

In concurrence with this declaration, Ibn Sa'ud's Ministers gave us to understand that the King would be prepared to sign a written undertaking in such terms as would satisfy us of the genuineness of his attitude. Without committing ourselves to the acceptance of any instrument other than the Protocol, we asked to be shown a text of the undertaking before we pronounced ourselves. After some delay, a draft letter covering both this question and that dealt with in paragraph 7 of the present Report was shown (but not delivered) to us, and of this letter we append a translation (Annex 6). In so far as the question of the frontier is concerned, we took the view that a letter in those terms would have no more effective value than is contained in an eloquent statement of good intentions.

(b.) *Points proposed by the King of the Hejaz.*

15. *Recognition of Independence.*—In the first draft which he presented (Annex 1)* Ibn Sa'ud had inserted a clause providing for his recognition by His Britannic Majesty as the "fully, completely and absolutely independent" King of the Hejaz and Nejd and their Dependencies, and for the extension of this recognition in due course to "his sons and grandsons." Our reply was that there was no objection in principle to such a clause being inserted in the treaty; but we pointed out that the recognition he required could scarcely be extended in such wholesale fashion to his descendants, and suggested that the phrase "his lawful successors" might be used instead. At the same time, while expressing our readiness to meet Ibn Sa'ud's wishes on this point, we endeavoured to persuade him that it was not necessary, in a treaty limited to seven years, to insert provisions for the coming generations. After some discussion, he accepted our point of view, and in his third draft (Annex 5) made no mention of his successors.

16. *Arms and Ammunition.*—This question was first raised in the second draft presented by Ibn Sa'ud (Annex 3),* in which he asked for an undertaking by His Majesty's Government "to annul all decisions placing an embargo on the supply of such arms and ammunition as might be required by the Government of the Hejaz and Nejd and their Dependencies." There was no controversial discussion on the principle of this question. We gave Ibn Sa'ud to understand that there would be no objection to His Majesty's Government issuing export licences for arms and ammunition required by him for governmental purposes, in accordance with the stipulations of the Arms Traffic Convention of 1925. We also endeavoured to persuade him not to insist on a clause being inserted in the treaty, but to content himself with the explicit written declaration which we should be prepared to send him independently of the treaty. When negotiations were suspended, Ibn Sa'ud was still pressing for the insertion of a clause in the treaty. The reason for this insistence was, as he informed us, that he thought it advisable to let the world, and in particular his enemies, know that it was open to him to arm his troops as and when he liked.

17. *Revenues of Haramain Waqfs.*—This question, which is one of considerable importance to Ibn Sa'ud, was raised by him in his second draft (Annex 3).* It relates to the revenues derived from certain religious endowments, known as "Awqaf al-Haramain," which were founded at different times in various Moslem countries for the specific purpose of providing a lasting revenue to be spent upon the upkeep and improvement of the two Sanctuaries of Islam, namely, Mecca and Medina. These endowments almost invariably take the form of real estate property,

* Not printed.

and the administration of those properties rests always with the competent authorities of the country in which each property is situated. But as regards the revenues derived therefrom, the special dedication attached to the endowment makes it incumbent on the authorities who administer each property to hand over the revenues collected to the competent authorities in the Hejaz, whose duty it is to maintain the two Harams.

Ibn Sa'ud declared that such endowments existed in various countries where British influence was exercised, notably in Egypt, Palestine, Iraq and India; that the competent authorities in those countries had been (and were still) withholding the revenues derived therefrom; and that he wished to ask His Majesty's Government to assist him in obtaining them. We replied that, owing to the religious aspect of this question and to the policy of non-interference in religious questions pursued by His Majesty's Government, we could not see our way to insert a clause in the treaty; but that we should be prepared to give Ibn Sa'ud a written statement to the effect that His Majesty's Government would whenever possible use their good offices towards assisting him in the recovery of those revenues, on the distinct understanding, however, that such assistance would be left entirely to the discretion of His Majesty's Government, and that, in any case, it would not entail any interference in the usual procedure or the sentences of the competent courts. After some discussion, Ibn Sa'ud recognised the force of our argument and withdrew the clause.

18. *Hejaz Railway.*—Efforts were made by Ibn Sa'ud to draw this question into the orbit of the treaty negotiations and to insert a clause relating to it in the proposed treaty. In the Protocol attached to his first draft (Annex 1)* as well as in article 7 of his second draft (Annex 3),* he had demanded the wholesale restitution of those sections of the railway which lie in Palestine and Transjordan, on the plea that the railway was the acknowledged property of the Moslem world and that the Hejaz Government were the only authority in whom the administration of pan-Islamic property could properly be vested. It was only after considerable discussion that we were able to persuade Ibn Sa'ud that this question, involving as it did the French Government, could have no place in a treaty between Great Britain and himself. We reminded him of the terms of the Joint Lausanne Declaration of 1923, of which the text had been formally communicated to him some months previously; and we explained to him why it could serve no useful purpose to suggest that the administration of the sections lying in mandated territory might be handed over by the Mandatory Power to a foreign Government. We also gave him to understand that it was not part of our mission to negotiate a settlement involving a departure from the principles laid down.

Having accepted to treat this question as a separate issue, and within the limits stated, Ibn Sa'ud proceeded to define his attitude. He declared that he would no longer insist on an immediate discussion of general principles, but that he would content himself with pointing out that the Hejaz had not been a party to the Lausanne Declaration of 1923, and that he wished the British Government to know that the Hejaz Government was reserving its freedom of action with regard to the contents of the Declaration. At the same time, he wished to impress upon His Majesty's Government the obvious desirability of putting the railway into running order before the coming pilgrimage if possible; and with this object in view he would request His Majesty's Government to place at once at the disposal of the Hejaz Government a sufficient sum of money (approximately £50,000) and an adequate quantity of rolling-stock to enable it to repair the Hejazian section of the line and organise a train service against the coming pilgrimage; it being understood that this sum would be treated as an advance on account pending the final settlement.

In putting forward this request, Ibn Sa'ud declared repeatedly that he would regard it as a distinct favour if His Majesty's Government were to arrange at once for the required advance to be made out of the revenues which he believed to have accrued from the working of the Hejaz Railway in mandated territory. Not content with verbal declarations, he caused a letter to be sent to us by his Foreign Secretary on the eve of our departure from Jedda, of which we append a translation (Annex 7).

We informed Ibn Sa'ud that we would convey to His Majesty's Government a clear statement of the substance of his request; but we abstained from giving him any indication, even conjectural, as to the likelihood of his request being acceded to.

* Not printed.

(c.) *Conclusions.*

19. We have endeavoured to show, in the preceding paragraphs, the degree of divergence to which our conversations had brought us; and we propose now to retrace, as briefly as possible, the steps by which we were led to interrupt the negotiations and the reasons which, in our opinion, rendered such an interruption necessary.

20. When, on the 4th December, Ibn Sa'ud handed in his third draft (Annex 5), which purported to represent his final offer, we were faced with a difficult choice. In itself, considered independently of the negotiations which had preceded it, the draft was not so objectionable that it could not be taken as providing a basis for discussion. It did contain, it is true, certain stipulations which were clearly unacceptable, as, for example, in articles 5 and 8. But these could easily have been settled by modification or deletion; and we have no reason for doubting that, had we adopted such a course, a treaty might have been concluded without undue departure from the letter of our instructions. Nevertheless, we thought it our duty to resist the temptation of concluding a treaty on those terms. We felt that the conditions put forward by Ibn Sa'ud had to be considered not only in themselves, but also in relation to the terms which we had set out to obtain; and not merely in regard to what they contained, but also in regard to what they omitted. A close comparison of his final offer with the conditions on which we had been proposing to conclude the treaty will reveal that the acceptance of his terms would have meant—

- (a.) The abandonment of the clause relating to the British special position in mandated territories.
- (b.) The deletion of the "national status" clause, or the surrender of juridical capitulatory rights.
- (c.) The virtual abandonment of the clause relating to slavery.
- (d.) The *sine die* postponement of the fixation of the Hejaz-Transjordan frontier.
- (e.) The modification in an unfavourable sense of the clauses relating to hostile activities, to pilgrims, and to the Trucial Chiefs.

We gave the most careful consideration to the choice before us, and came deliberately to the conclusion that we should be doing a grave disservice to the interests of His Majesty's Government in concluding a treaty on those terms. At the same time, we took care, in conveying our decision to Ibn Sa'ud, to avoid anything approaching a rupture.

21. In arriving at this decision, we were swayed by one other aspect of the situation. The initiative for the conclusion of the proposed treaty had come from Ibn Sa'ud, and it was clear that one of his principal motives was his desire to secure the cancellation of the onerous Treaty of 1915. This Treaty is still in force, and the prospect of its abrogation is so alluring to Ibn Sa'ud as to render him more amenable to persuasion than he otherwise might be. Moreover, he is particularly anxious to secure a formal and explicit recognition of his independence as ruler of the Hejaz and Nejd. Had we concluded a treaty on the basis of his third draft, we should have thereby, on the one hand, granted concessions which may perhaps be described as his two main objectives in the conclusion of the new treaty; and, on the other, reserved for future negotiation with a probably less amenable Ibn Sa'ud the main objectives pursued by His Majesty's Government. In other words, we should have surrendered what we believe to be a valuable position in the strategy of negotiation; and with regard to the points left outstanding the task of future negotiations would probably have been rendered considerably more difficult.

22. We wish to make it clear, moreover, that we did not decide to suspend negotiations merely on receipt of Ibn Sa'ud's third draft. Between the date of its presentation and the date on which we suggested to him that negotiations be interrupted, seven days had elapsed during which we were busily engaged with the King and his advisers in further negotiation; for although we were firmly of opinion that it were better to interrupt negotiations than to conclude a treaty on disadvantageous conditions, yet we were anxious that no avenue of possible agreement should be left unexplored. We had also to bear in mind the effect which an interruption might have on Ibn Sa'ud's future attitude. It was only after long and exhaustive discussion during which we were able to gauge his real dispositions with reasonable certainty that we decided on the interruption of negotiations.

We are firmly of opinion that Ibn Sa'ud was and remains genuine in his professions of friendship with Great Britain, and that the interruption of negotiations which he, and more particularly his Ministers, received with scarcely veiled concern and regret will be found to have had a favourable effect on his readiness to come to terms. In this connection we think it useful to append the letter which he addressed to us when we took our leave of him (Annex 8), in which he expresses his regret at the interruption, and his hope that negotiations may be resumed in the spring and lead to agreement.

23. It has been our aim in the present report, which is primarily a record of the issues involved, to confine ourselves to a statement of the facts. We would, however, express the opinion that the conclusion of a treaty of friendship and concord with the present Ruler of the Hejaz and Nejd is in principle desirable. We believe that imperial interests call for the conclusion of such a treaty with a ruler of undoubted ability and power, whose prestige in the Moslem world is visibly growing, and whose empire seems to be securely established, at any rate for the next few years, from the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf; and that a treaty with him would be of real value if it can be concluded without the sacrifice of any vital British interest.

We have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN,

First Delegate and Plenipotentiary.

G. ANTONIUS,

Second Delegate.

ANNEX 5.

Draft Treaty presented by the King of the Hejaz on December 4, 1926.

PREAMBLE.

Accepted as proposed by His Majesty's Government.

ARTICLE 1.

There shall be peace and friendship between His Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their Dependencies. Each of the high contracting parties undertakes to maintain good relations with the other, and to endeavour by all the means at his disposal to prevent his territories being used as a base for unlawful activities against the other party.

ARTICLE 2.

His Britannic Majesty recognises the complete and absolute independence of the dominions of His Majesty 'Abdul 'Azir-ibn-'Abdul Rahman-al-Faisal-Al-Sa'ud, King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their Dependencies.

ARTICLE 3.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their Dependencies notifies that the performance of the pilgrimage will be facilitated to Moslem British subjects or British-protected persons, to the same extent as to all other pilgrims; that they will be safe as regards their property and their persons during their stay in the territories of His Majesty; and that they shall receive no treatment which is contrary to the established laws while in the territories of His Majesty.

ARTICLE 4.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their Dependencies undertakes that the belongings of any of the pilgrims referred to in the preceding article of the present treaty who may die in the territories of His Majesty and have no lawful trustee in those territories shall be handed over to the British representative in Jedda or to such person as may be delegated by the latter for the

purpose, for transmission to the rightful heirs of the deceased pilgrim; it being understood that such belongings will not be handed over to the British authority until the formalities required by the relevant Shar'ia laws will have been accomplished and the dues prescribed in the ordinances of the Hejaz-Nejd Government will have been collected.

ARTICLE 5.

His Britannic Majesty recognises the national (Hejazi or Nejd) status of all subjects of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their Dependencies who may at any time be within the territories of His Britannic Majesty. On his part His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their Dependencies recognises the national (British) status of all subjects of His Britannic Majesty who may at any time be within the territories of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their Dependencies; provided that such persons shall be subject to the established laws of the country in which they may be.

ARTICLE 6.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their Dependencies undertakes to maintain, as did his fathers and grandfathers, relations of friendship and peace with Kuwait and Bahrain and with the Shaikhs of Qatar and the Oman Coast.

ARTICLE 7.

Under consideration. (This article relates to the suppression of the slave trade.)

ARTICLE 8.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their Dependencies will be at full liberty to purchase and import arms, war material and ammunition, and such machines and implements as may be required from abroad for the Hejaz-Nejd Government. His Britannic Majesty undertakes that no measure shall be taken to prevent the importation of whatever arms, war material, ammunition, machines or implements which the Hejaz-Nejd Government may consider necessary for their own use.

ARTICLE 9.

The present Treaty shall be ratified by each of the high contracting parties and the ratifications exchanged as soon as possible. It shall come into force on the date of the exchange of the ratifications and shall be binding for seven years from that date. In case neither of the high contracting parties shall have given notice to the other six months before the expiration of the said period of seven years of his intention to terminate the Treaty, it shall remain in force and shall not be held to have terminated until the expiration of six months from the date on which one of the parties shall give notice of termination to the other party.

ARTICLE 10.

The treaty concluded between His Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their Dependencies on the 26th December, 1915, when His Majesty was Ruler of Nejd and of its then Dependencies, shall cease to have effect as from the date on which the present Treaty comes into force.

ARTICLE 11.

The present Treaty has been drawn up in English and Arabic. Each text will have the same validity, but in case of divergence in the interpretation of any part thereof reference will be made to the English version.

ANNEX 6.

Draft Letter from the King of the Hejaz relating to the Hejaz-Transjordan Frontier and to Mandates.

IN confirmation of our conversations relating to the recognition of His Britannic Majesty's special position in Iraq, Transjordan and Palestine, and the fixation of the frontier between the Hejaz and Transjordan, I desire to assure His Majesty's Government that I do not intend any harm whatsoever to British interests by not recognising the special position in mandated territory, but that the present circumstances compel me to abstain from intervening in matters with the previous history of which I have had no personal connection. I believe that, by abstaining from entering into this subject, I am warding off consequences which would be harmful to our interests and which it is not in the interests of His Majesty's Government to provoke against us.

As for the frontier, I am of opinion that, in the circumstances, there is no possibility of settling the matter at present; and that it is necessary, in the common interest, to postpone its settlement. We shall seize the first possible opportunity to come to an agreement over this question, and we are confident that agreement thereon will be reached in a spirit of amity and concord between the two parties and on a basis which will satisfy their respective interests. Our firm desire to uphold right and justice, which Great Britain has had proof of in all our conduct and our demands, as well as my belief that His Majesty's Government are animated by the same spirit, make me confident that the settlement of this question, when we take it up, will be easy. I trust that His Majesty's Government will have full confidence that my attitude will be peaceful, friendly and reasonable, as it has ever been in the past.

In support of that, I send you this letter.
(Respects.)

ANNEX 7.

Letter from the Foreign Minister of the Hejaz relating to the Hejaz Railway.

Kingdom of the Hejaz.
Directorate of Foreign Affairs.
(No. 340.)

Mecca, Jumada II 14, 1345.
(December 19, 1926.)

To His Britannic Majesty's Delegate,

I AM commanded by His Majesty the King to draw your attention to the question of the Hejaz Railway, which formed the subject of discussion in the negotiations relating to the Treaty of Friendship between His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz.

The Hejaz Government, while maintaining their right to the management of this Railway over all its sections, wish to say that, having taken cognisance of the Joint Declaration of Lausanne, they find that the terms of that Declaration are not sufficiently explicit in regard both to management and powers, and to the expenditure and allocation of revenues. In view of the fact that they were not consulted on the matter, the Hejaz Government request that they may be furnished with a detailed statement in elucidation of the terms of the Declaration and of their exact application, so that they may be in a better position to judge to what extent their rights have or have not been safeguarded in the Declaration.

His Majesty the King is confident that the question of the Hejaz Railway will be examined with the eye of justice and impartiality, and that effective negotiations may be opened for the settlement in a spirit of amity and concord. As, however, there is an urgent need for the repair of the section lying in the territories of His Majesty; and as the other sections have been collecting and have accumulated revenues which are admittedly destined for the maintenance of all sections in common, the Hejaz Government feel that, pending the examination and the settlement of this question on a satisfactory basis, they should immediately be given a certain quantity of locomotives, implements and rolling-stock, as well as the necessary sum of money, to enable them to repair and put into condition that section of the line which lies in the territories of His Majesty. The Hejaz Government will appoint the required technical staff.

In view of their desire to enable pilgrims to make use of the Railway in the coming pilgrimage, the Hejaz Government request you to endeavour to obtain by the quickest possible means a favourable reply, as a benefit to the Moslem world and in the general interest of the Railway as a whole, pending a final settlement.

(Respects.)

ABDULLAH DAMLUJI,
Foreign Minister.

ANNEX 8.

'Abdul-'Aziz-ibn-'Abdul-Rahman-al-Faisal-Al-Sa'ud to Mr. Jordan, His
Britannic Majesty's Delegate.

Kingdom of the Hejaz and
Sultanate of Nejd and its Dependencies.
(No. 99.)

Medina, Jumada II 10, 1345.
(December 15, 1926.)

IT would have gratified me to have concluded a treaty of amity and friendship with His Majesty the King of Great Britain at the meeting held recently. I received with regret your proposal for the suspension of the negotiations and their deferment until after your consultation with the British Government on the subject of our just demands. I have acceded to your request for the postponement of negotiations until the latter part of the month of Shawal next, and I trust that agreement may then be reached on a basis which shall safeguard the interests of both parties and strengthen the bonds of friendship and concord between us and the British Government.

(Seal) 'ABDUL-'AZIZ-IBN-SA'UD.

[E 376/22/91]

No. 13.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir Gilbert Clayton.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 27, 1927.

I HAVE now had an opportunity of considering the records of the discussions which you and Sir Ronald Graham so ably conducted with the Italian experts in Rome regarding British and Italian interests in the Red Sea.

2. I am entirely satisfied with the results so far achieved in obtaining Italian recognition of the British interests involved, and in eliciting an explanation of the views and desiderata of the Italian Government. In order to fulfil the purpose of your mission I think it desirable that you should return to Rome at the earliest possible date, in order to make known to Signor Gasparini, before he leaves for Massowa, the results of your report to His Majesty's Government and to draw up with him an agreed record of your discussions.

3. Your first duty will be to obtain from the Italian experts, on behalf of the Italian Government, unqualified acceptance of a formula by which they: (a) recognise that, in view of the necessity of assuring Imperial communications with India and the East, it is a vital Imperial interest that no European Power should establish itself on the Arabian shore of the Red Sea, and more particularly on Kamaran and the Farsan Islands and that neither Kamaran nor the Farsan Islands shall fall into the hands of an unfriendly Arab ruler; and (b) renounce any political ambition as regards the territory and islands above mentioned. In return for an assurance on these lines, you will explain that His Majesty's Government welcome, in the Red Sea area as elsewhere, a policy of the fullest possible co-operation on parallel lines.

4. Equality of commercial opportunity is a corollary of political co-operation, and as evidence of the sincere desire of His Majesty's Government to co-operate with the Italian Government in any way possible, you may assure them that His Majesty's Government are, in principle, favourably disposed towards Italian participation in the Farsan Islands concession, if and in so far as such participation may be found practicable.

5. You should then proceed with the utmost frankness to explain to the Italian experts the various difficulties deriving from the existence of the present concession, the actual and prospective claims of other would-be concessionaires and the incalculable effect on any concession of the recent treaty between Ibn Saud and the

Idrisi. You will, I feel sure, be able to make it abundantly clear that a practicable method of ensuring Italian participation is, at any rate in present circumstances, not easy to devise. Any suggestion which they may have to offer for a solution of this difficulty will be gladly and sympathetically considered.

6. As regards recognition of the Ibn Saud-Idrisi treaty, you should explain that His Majesty's Government appreciate the Italian point of view and are prepared to defer to it by avoiding any appearance of endorsing the territorial provisions of the treaty. In no case will His Majesty's Government volunteer recognition and they are disposed to postpone recognition for as long as may be possible. You should add, however, that this may not be easy, seeing that His Majesty's Government are engaged in treaty negotiations with Ibn Saud, who is likely to take an early opportunity of seeking His Majesty's Government's recognition of the treaty. While, therefore, it may not be possible indefinitely to defer recognition, it will in any case be made clear to Ibn Saud that the policy of His Majesty's Government is to disinterest themselves in matters of internal Arabian politics and that, as the treaty involves certain territorial adjustments in respect of territory claimed by two Arab rulers, His Majesty's Government must specifically withhold any recognition of the territorial provisions and implications of the treaty.

7. As regards Kamaran, you will do your utmost to prevent the question of the juridical status of the island from being discussed. With a view to avoiding this you may assure the Italian representatives that His Majesty's Government are favourably considering the possibility of meeting their wish that an Italian doctor should be added to the staff at Kamaran, assuming always that it can be established that the number of Italian pilgrims merits it. Should an Italian doctor be added, it would presumably be necessary to add also a French doctor.

8. Finally you will, as further proof of our desire for complete frankness and the fullest co-operation, inform the Italian experts that it is proposed at an early date to reinforce the air effectives at Aden and to warn the Imam that any further encroachment in the Aden Protectorate, or any threat to the Farsan Islands, will render him liable to measures of retaliation. You should impress on them that we would welcome a friendly settlement of our difficulties with the Imam and you may, if you consider it useful, indicate that our desire for such a settlement may afford them an opportunity of proving the value of a policy of co-operation.

I am, &c.

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

[E 644/644/91]

No. 14.

Acting Consul Mayers to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received February 7.)

(No. 2. Secret.)

Sir,

Jeddah, January 8, 1927.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith my report on the situation in the Hejaz during the period of the 1st-31st December, 1926.

2. Copies of this report are being sent to Egypt, Jerusalem (2), Bagdad, Aden, Simla, Beirut (for Damascus), Khartum (through Port Sudan), and Singapore.

I have, &c.

NORMAN MAYERS.

Enclosure in No. 14.

Jeddah Report for the Period December 1-31, 1926.

ALTHOUGH Ibn Saud has prolonged his residence in Medina throughout December, his departure is now imminent. The King is thus returning to his native Nejd for the first time after his conquest and pacification of the Hejaz. It is a year since he entered Jeddah and since King Ali definitely abandoned his shadowy hold on the Holy Places. He has no reason to be dissatisfied with the progress made. Complete peace reigns in the Hejaz, where the name of Ibn Saud is universally feared. Economically, perhaps, the country is not happy. Its financial centre is Jeddah, and, as is evident from recurrent and unmistakable symptoms here, there is a painful lack of funds in all quarters. The employees in the Customs and the

Government's mechanical workshops in Jeddah, for example, have had their pay cut down by 50 per cent. this month, and have been told quite bluntly that the State is not in a position to pay them more. Ibn Saud's Treasury arrangements, unorganised as in many respects they seem to be, are not directly to blame for this state of wretched penury. It cannot be repeated too often that the pilgrimage is the only source of prosperity in the Hejaz, and that, until a regular sequence of good pilgrim seasons has strengthened the country's resources, the present financial misery is bound to continue.

2. The King's plans are to leave for Riyadh in the early days of January, returning to the Hejaz for Ramadan. During Ibn Saud's absence his second son the Emir Feisal, who was recently in Europe, will be his spokesman in the Hejaz, where Dr. Abdullah Bey Damluji, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, will also remain. There can be no question, however, as to who will direct affairs, whether His Majesty is in Medina or Riyadh. A creditably efficient system of wireless telegraphs enables Ibn Saud to broadcast from Jeddah and Medina his authoritative bed-time stories, the newest "Arabian Nights," to half a dozen posts in the Hejaz. I understand that there is as yet no wireless installation at Riyadh. That will not prevent all matters of importance being referred to the King personally, for he keeps everything under his own hand. An arrangement has been made for maintaining communications from Riyadh by courier to Medina, whence they will be assured by wireless.

3. The conversations in camp near Medina which were opened in November between Mr. Jordan, assisted by Mr. Antonius, and His Majesty came for the present to an end on the 11th December, when it was decided that certain matters connected with the negotiations should be referred to His Majesty's Government. The meeting had aroused a good deal of local attention. An official statement has therefore been issued by the Hedjaz authorities to the effect that the meeting was held to discuss certain outstanding questions between the British Government and the King, among which were the problem of the restoration of loot by Transjordan tribesmen and the cable question. Several meetings took place at Wadi-el-Akik, the statement goes on to say, and some of the business on hand was concluded. The remaining questions were postponed in order to give the British Government an opportunity to learn the point of view of the Government of the Hejaz and Nejd. Discussions will be resumed at a later date.

4. The cable referred to is the submarine line between Jeddah and Port Sudan, and agreement as to its ownership and method of exploitation has now practically been reached. The cable will become the joint property of the Sudan and Hejaz Governments, and it is proposed to authorise the Eastern Telegraph Company to work and maintain it under an agreement to be concluded between that company and the two Governments. As soon as the necessary signatures have been put to the agreement, it is understood that the repair ship "Mirror" will be ordered to Jeddah to carry out repairs on the interrupted cable. For the time being, as has been the procedure for a considerable period, telegraphic communication between Port Sudan and Jeddah is by wireless.

5. Sheikh Murgani-el-Idrisi, who came to Ibn Saud as an envoy from the ruling Idrisi Sayyid Hassan in September last, has again arrived in the Hejaz by sea-going dhow from Jizan, and visited Ibn Saud at Medina.

6. Now that it has been possible to compare information from different sources, it becomes increasingly clear that the attitude of Ibn Saud to the Imam Yahya is substantially that described in the Jeddah report for October. The King is not prepared to see Asir annexed by the Imam. In fact, on the strength of a recommendation of Asir to his protection, which he claims, the late Sayyid Mohammed-el-Idrisi made to him on his death-bed, Ibn Saud looks upon that small State as his particular preserve.

7. The Palestinian journalist von Weisl, who was in Jeddah in October and who obtained such interesting declarations from Ibn Saud, has now returned from the south with copious notes, a longing to get back into his Mittel-Europa knickerbockers, and a vast admiration for the machinations of Britain in the Farsan Islands. He left for Egypt before Christmas.

8. He made little journalistic headway, it appears, in the Imam's territory, although he noted defensive preparations at Medi; but he spent ten days at Jizan, and was welcomed, he says, in Idrisi circles. There he found an atmosphere of confidence and even bellicosity. He saw the ruling Idrisi Sayyid Hassan, and the triumvirate who direct him: Sidi Ahmed Shereef-el-Senussi, the "Grand" Senussi; Jemal "Pasha"-el-Gazi, a former Turkish officer of Palestinian origin, whom von Weisl describes as having been formerly an aide-de-camp to Enver Pasha, and

whose tedium in Jizan he helped to wile away with long games of chess; and Sayyid Mustafa-el-Idrisi. These personages were obviously convinced that the clouds had passed from over Asir, now that they had established relations with a powerful oil company, and that, if there were to be any more rain, it would shower sovereigns. They seemed to feel, too, although they are aware that his interest cannot be purely paternal, that they can rely, should the worst come to the worst, on the protection of Ibn Saud. Indeed, Jizan was in excellent spirits, and if the musical conceptions of the Grand Senussi and his friends were more in harmony with modern tastes, one could almost imagine Jizan echoing to the refrain of the popular song to which discreet allusion is made above.

9. Relations with Transjordan have improved. His Majesty's High Commissioner for Palestine proposed the reassembly in Palestine of the raids tribunal, which met with such little success at Maan in September last. In considering this proposal, Ibn Saud was inclined to make a stand for his formula that, before setting up the tribunal afresh, the Transjordan tribesmen should be made to hand over all undisputed loot not yet surrendered. It was, however, pointed out to the King that such was the procedure already adopted, and that during the past twelve months a considerable number of camels had been returned by the Transjordan raiders. Consequently, in the last days of 1926, Ibn Saud definitely agreed to send two delegates to Palestine to sit with two Transjordan delegates on a claims tribunal, over which a British officer would preside. It is not unlikely that His Majesty's decision was in part dictated by his urgent desire to see something accomplished in this sore question before leaving Medina for the less accessible parts of his dominions.

10. Mr. Charles W. Crane arrived in Jeddah from Egypt on Christmas morning on a short visit to the Hejaz, his ultimate goal being Hodeida, whence he hopes to go up to Sanaa. He will be remembered as one of the two private commissioners sent out to Palestine and Syria in 1919 by President Wilson to conduct an enquiry into the desiderata of the local populations regarding their future political status, the results of which were embodied in the King-Crane report. In 1922 he was again in Syria, but was asked by the French to leave Damascus, after demonstrations there of which, willingly or unwillingly, he was the "point de départ." Early in 1923 Mr. Crane paid a visit to Jeddah, where he was treated as an official guest by King Hussein.

11. Perhaps in emulation of the warmth of his reception in 1923, when, as I see from consulting old files of the Hashimite newspaper the "Kibla" he was described as the friend of humanity, Mr. Crane was again treated as an honoured official guest. He was welcomed to Jeddah by the kaimakam, and the Emir Feisal came down specially from Mecca to visit him. Nevertheless, nothing else of outstanding interest seems to have happened to Mr. Crane, for the King evaded a suggestion that the enterprising old American should be allowed to visit him near Medina, as well as overtures for permission to make an expedition to Taif.

12. Mr. Crane is 68. He gives the impression of a wealthy man who, having adopted the East as a hobby, has steadily ridden it from Harbin to Constantinople whenever, as appears often to have been the case, he has been able to spare time away from his business interests in Chicago. His pastime has in the past opened up the path to his appointment as American Minister in China, and in the present provides him with an ever-increasing fund of excellent if somewhat lengthy reminiscences. But I should hesitate to characterise Mr. Crane's interests, in so far as any rate as they have been manifested here, as anything more than ethically sentimental and politically romantic. It is typical of him that his dragoman, a rather stupid fellow, is said to be the brother-in-law of Dr. Chabandar, the Syrian insurgent leader. Nothing will stop Mr. Crane from interesting himself in other people's affairs, but his intentions are not mischievous. A rumour of concession hunting has pursued him to Jeddah, but that is only to be expected, and it will probably pursue him further, especially when he gets into the zone of the Farsan Islands. However, equipped with cook and valet, camp furniture and almost all the thirty-seven varieties of Heinz's canned provisions, he is now bending his steps towards Sanaa, to complete that study of the Arabs on which the American journals with which he keeps in touch no doubt consider him to have constituted himself an expert authority.

13. Satisfaction is expressed in the official "Umm-el-Kura" at the establishment in India and Java of branch societies in support of the scheme for yearly conferences in Mecca to carry on the work of last year's Islamic Conference.

14. As a counterblast to the resolution passed by the "Hejaz Conference" at Lucknow discouraging Indian Moslems from making the pilgrimage while Ibn Saud remains master of the Hejaz, reference to which was made in paragraphs 10 and 11

of the Jeddah report for November, a fetva has been obtained from the ulema of Medina condemning any such interference with a purely religious duty. A translation of this fetva will be found in an appendix* to the present report.

15. The Prophet's Tomb at Medina is still intact, so that the apprehensions of the Maharajah of Mahmudabad and his telegrams to different potentates are unfounded. Such apprehensions were no doubt aroused by the presence with the King in Medina of the two belligerent Wahabi divines, Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Bileihid and Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Hassan, as mentioned in paragraph 9 of the November report. These men, and probably the King himself, have not abated one whit of their conviction that the veneration of shrines is idolatrous and the practices associated with them vain superstition. The first of them only a short time ago, in a long exordium printed in the official "Umm-el-Kura," denounced anew all worshipping at tombs and capped his sermon with a host of quotations from the traditions. Further, in the latter half of the fetva alluded to in paragraph 14 above, it is made clear that, from the doctrinal point of view, there is no modification of the official point of view in this matter.

16. Be that as it may, the fact remains that the Tomb of the Prophet, with its screen, well and palm trees, is now as it has always been. It is becoming evident that, unless something untoward or unexpected occurs, the tendency is for the iconoclasts to leave untouched the Green Dome of the Prophet while the eyes of the Moslem world are upon it.

17. The other tombs, those of the family and friends of the Prophet, are, on the other hand, lying in a state of neglect, their domes demolished and their walls desolate. The famous Tomb of Hamza, the uncle of Mohammed, still has a wall and a gate, but its cupola is destroyed.

18. A member of the staff of this agency, who was recently in Medina, found the city but a poor replica of its former self. Great curiosity was manifested in the presence of a British representative at Wady-el-Akik, his negotiations being thought by some of the townspeople to foreshadow a British concession for reconditioning the Hejaz Railway northward to Syria, such as would revive Medina's languishing hopes.

19. The first pilgrims have begun to arrive. A thousand had disembarked by the 31st December, chiefly from Malay and Java. From both these quarters the year's pilgrimage promises well.

20. An order has been issued prohibiting the importation into Ibn Saud's dominions of wireless apparatus for private use.

21. Eight slaves have been sent back to Africa during the month.

22. There will be three local members, and not four as stated in paragraph 20 of the report for last month, in the Jeddah Commercial Court.

NORMAN MAYERS.

[E 645/22/91]

No. 15.

Acting Consul Mayers to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received February 7.)

(No. 6.)

Sir,

Jeddah, January 19, 1927.

IN the "Mecca Agreement" of the 21st October, 1926, between Ibn Saud and the Idrisi, translation of which was enclosed in my despatch No. 3 of the 8th January, the territory of Asir placed under the suzerainty of the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd was defined as "the ancient frontiers ('hudud'), which were mentioned in the Agreement of the 10th Safar, 1339, between the Sultan of Nejd and the Imam, Sayyid Mohammed-bin-Ali-al-Idrisi, and which were, at that date, subject to the Idrisis."

2. When the new agreement appeared in the press, I wrote a friendly note to Dr. Abdullah Bey Damluji, Director for Foreign Affairs, asking if any information was available with regard to the extent of Asir as mentioned in the former treaty of 1339 (1920). Abdullah Bey came to see me a day or two afterwards on other matters, and in the course of conversation said that he had received my note and had written to the King, who is now in Riyadh, on the matter. Possibly, at a later date, he might be in a position to give me privately the text of the definition of 1339 (1920).

* Not printed.

3. Abdullah Bey went on to say that this old treaty of 1339 only defined the north-south frontier in the Muhail-Ebha region agreed upon between Ibn Saud and Sayyid Mohammed. It did not attempt to make a partition between Asir and the territory of the Imam Yahya. I thereupon pointed out that, in that case, no one would be able to say exactly over what territory Ibn Saud had now become the suzerain. Abdullah Bey made the guarded reply that for the present it could be assumed that the new agreement applied to the territory actually administered by Sayyid Hassan, the ruling Idrisi.

4. He further volunteered the statement that the question had been raised whether the oil concession recently granted by the Idrisi to a British firm in the Farsan Islands would become null and void under article 2 of the new convention. His personal opinion was, he said, that such would not be the case, as the concession was presumably granted by the Idrisi before he signed the new agreement on the 21st October last.

5. Abdullah Bey also seemed to think that the "Mecca Agreement" would not bring about, at any rate just at present, a collision between the forces of Ibn Saud and the Imam Yahya. He went on to state that, as a matter of fact, His Majesty and the Imam Yahya were still exchanging views on the question of Asir.

6. I asked Abdullah Bey if the coastal town of Medi should be considered as being in Asir or in the Imam's territory. From the vague reply he made I understood that, in his view, Medi belonged to Asir, rather than to the Imam.

7. Since the above conversation, Dr. Abdullah Bey Damluji has unfortunately left the Hejaz for Hasa, and will not be back for two months. Before he left, however, I asked him to communicate my private request for information to his successor, Sheikh Yusuf Yassin, and he said he would do so.

8. In the meanwhile I have been examining the archives of this agency, and have satisfied myself that there is no record here of the convention of 1339 (1920). There is a reference to intimate relations between Ibn Saud and the Idrisi in paragraph 3 of the "Aden News Letter, No. 1," dated the 31st January, 1922, which drew from the secretary to His Majesty's High Commissioner for Iraq the following comment in his secret letter dated the 9th March, 1922, to the Political Resident, Aden, copy of which was sent to Jeddah:—

"... regarding the relations between Ibn Saud and the Idrisi.

"I am to inform you that his Excellency has recently received a report containing a reference to this subject from Dr. A. Mann, who is at Riyadh on a medical mission to Ibn Saud. Dr. Mann states that Ibn Saud showed him a document signed by Sayyid Mohammed-al-Idrisi himself, the purport of which was the conclusion of an offensive and defensive alliance between them; it also included a provision allowing Ibn Saud a free hand from the territory occupied by the Imam northwards."

9. Ibn Saud has thus definitely asserted now that suzerainty over Asir to which he laid more general claim in a letter transmitted to you by Mr. Bullard in his despatch No. 61 from Jeddah of the 8th July, 1925, copy of which was sent to Aden. One cannot help but admire the patience with which he has worked out during the last six or seven years this extension of his influence. If ever in the future he is forced by circumstance to measure himself with the Imam Yahya of the Yemen, he has in Asir, and especially in the region of Asir's indeterminate southern frontier, an excellent *casus belli*. Meanwhile, Ibn Saud knows how to wait until his position is not only tactically but also morally strong.

10. I am forwarding a copy of this despatch to the Political Resident at Aden, who will be in a better position than I am to state what exactly was the extent of the territory "subject to the Idrisis" at the time of the conclusion of the 1339 (1920) agreement; and to His Majesty's High Commissioner for Iraq. I am also forwarding to Sir Henry Dobbs copy of my despatch No. 3 to which the present despatch refers.

I have, &c.

NORMAN MAYERS.

[E 637/22/91]

No. 16.

*Notes of a Meeting held at the Palazzo Chigi on January 31, 1927, at 5.30 P.M.
(Communicated to the Foreign Office, February 7.)*

Present :

The Right Hon. Sir Ronald Graham, G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., C.B.
Brigadier-General Sir Gilbert Clayton, K.C.M.G., K.B.E., C.B.
Signor Guariglia.
Signor Gasparini.

SIR RONALD GRAHAM stated that Sir Gilbert Clayton had, since the last meeting, returned to London and informed His Majesty's Government of the results of the conversations up to date. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had expressed his satisfaction at the measure of agreement arrived at, and especially at the very friendly atmosphere in which it was evident that the conversations had taken place. The Secretary of State was glad to think that the Italian representatives were prepared to recognise that, in view of the necessity of assuring Imperial communications with India and the East, it was a vital Imperial interest that no European Power should establish itself on the Arabian shore of the Red Sea, and more particularly on Kamaran and the Farsan Islands, and that neither Kamaran nor the Farsan Islands should fall into the hands of an unfriendly Arab ruler; and that just as, apart from the safeguarding of the above principle, His Majesty's Government had no political ambitions throughout the Red Sea area, so the Italian Government were prepared to renounce any political ambition as regards the territory and islands above mentioned. With regard to the various points which had been raised by the Italian representatives in the course of the previous conversations, he asked Sir Gilbert Clayton to explain the instructions which he had received from His Majesty's Government.

SIR GILBERT CLAYTON then dealt with the various points for discussion seriatim, starting with that of the recent treaty concluded between Ibn Saud and the Idrisi, by which the former had assumed a protectorate over the territories of Asir. He stated that he had laid before His Majesty's Government the point of view of the Italian Government that recognition by Great Britain of the treaty would be unfortunate, in that it would tend to approve of Ibn Saud's possible territorial claims and certainly give to the Imam of the Yemen the impression that Great Britain was definitely supporting Ibn Saud in ambitions which were not unlikely to lead to an outbreak of hostilities between the two principal rulers in Arabia. He explained that His Majesty's Government had given due consideration to the Italian point of view and were prepared to defer to it by avoiding any appearance of endorsing the territorial provisions of the treaty, and would in no case volunteer recognition, which they are disposed to postpone for as long as may be possible. He pointed out, however, that some difficulty might arise in this respect, in view of the fact that His Majesty's Government were actually at the moment engaged in treaty negotiations with Ibn Saud, who was not unlikely to take an early opportunity of asking His Majesty's Government's recognition of the treaty. It might therefore be impossible to defer recognition indefinitely, but His Majesty's Government were prepared to make it clear to Ibn Saud, in any case, that the policy of His Majesty's Government was one of non-interference in matters of internal Arabian politics, and that, as the treaty involves certain territorial adjustments in respect of territory claimed by two Arab rulers, they must specifically withhold any recognition of its territorial provisions and implications.

The Italian representatives were evidently anxious that His Majesty's Government should refuse any recognition of the treaty, observing that the partial recognition suggested was unlikely to satisfy Ibn Saud, as the main value of the treaty rested on its territorial provisions. They urged that, in any case, His Majesty's Government should avoid at all costs the possibility of giving the impression that they are supporting Ibn Saud in claims to territory which was likely to be a matter of dispute between him and the Imam; in addition, they expressed the hope that His Majesty's Government would, if suitable opportunity should arise, impress upon Ibn Saud the desirability of not pushing his claims to a point which would involve him in active hostilities with the Imam of the Yemen.

SIGNOR GUARIGLIA then raised, in the above connection, the question of the despatch of air reinforcements to Aden, and stated that the Italian Government had been informed that reports of such action had given rise to various rumours, including one to the effect that active hostilities were contemplated against the Imam, and that air action against Sanaa was to be taken, with the Island of Kamaran as a base. The British representatives were able to reassure Signor Guariglia on this point, and SIR GILBERT CLAYTON stated that it was part of his instructions to explain exactly what reasons had given rise to the reinforcement of the air force at Aden. He stated that there was no question of instituting an offensive against the Imam, at any rate at present. The Imam was in occupation of a considerable portion of the British protectorate of Aden, and had hitherto refused to withdraw; at the same time he had continued to pursue a policy of gradual encroachment upon tribes which were in treaty relations with His Majesty's Government, and it was with a view to putting a stop to this policy of gradual penetration that steps had been taken to resist him should he attempt further encroachment. His Majesty's Government were therefore taking the necessary steps, but were at the same time informing the Imam of the reasons for their action, and, while reiterating their desire for an amicable arrangement, impressing upon him the fact that further encroachment on the Aden protectorate or any attack on the Farsan Islands would render him liable to retaliatory measures.

SIGNOR GASPARINI observed that, while fully appreciating the explanation that had been given, the action which had been taken could not but upset the Imam and perhaps give him the impression that Great Britain was assuming a definitely hostile attitude towards him.

In reply, SIR GILBERT CLAYTON reminded Signor Gasparini that the Imam was in actual occupation of a very considerable portion of the Aden Protectorate, that he had refused to withdraw, and that it could therefore hardly be expected that Great Britain should permit him to encroach further on the Aden Protectorate without taking suitable measures for its defence. If the Imam were likely to misunderstand the intentions of His Majesty's Government in this respect, it would be most helpful if the Italian authorities were to find it possible to point out to him that the responsibility lay upon him for any retaliatory measures which it might be found necessary to take against him, and that his best course would be to refrain from any further encroachments.

SIR RONALD GRAHAM then stated that His Majesty's Government were entirely in favour of equality of commercial opportunity as a corollary of political co-operation, and as evidence of their sincere desire to co-operate with the Italian Government in any way possible, they would be favourably disposed towards Italian participation in the Farsan Islands concession, if and in so far as such participation might be found practicable.

SIR GILBERT CLAYTON then explained the existing situation in regard to the concession which had been obtained by the Shell Company from the Idrisi, emphasising the fact that the company had received no special support from His Majesty's Government, and were merely one of several competitors; he added, however, that it would of course be impossible to force the company to accept participation against their inclinations.

SIGNOR GUARIGLIA and SIGNOR GASPARINI both denied any desire on the part of the Italian Government to ask for pressure of any kind to be brought to bear on the company, and stated that all that they required was a free field for Italian commercial enterprise and no definite pressure exerted by His Majesty's Government against the interests of Italian subjects who might be endeavouring to prosecute commercial activities in the Farsan Islands.

SIR RONALD GRAHAM and SIR GILBERT CLAYTON both assured the Italian representatives that His Majesty's Government had no wish to obstruct Italian commercial activity in this area, and had indeed gone as far as to state that they would be favourably disposed towards Italian participation in the existing oil concession and would gladly and sympathetically consider any proposals to this effect which the Italian Government might put forward.

The question of the inclusion of an Italian doctor on the quarantine staff at Kamaran was then brought forward, and SIR RONALD GRAHAM explained that

His Majesty's Government did not view this suggestion with favour, seeing that the number of Italian pilgrims was much too small to merit the appointment of an Italian doctor. Such an appointment could not be justified on these grounds, and would therefore be interpreted as a political move, which would doubtless lead to requests for similar appointments from other Powers, more particularly from the French Government. In this connection, he quoted the statistics of pilgrims passing through the quarantine station at Kamaran in the year 1924.

SIGNORS GASPARIINI and GUARIGLIA both urged this point somewhat strongly, and again drew attention to the fact that the Italian Government had had a doctor at Kamaran before the war, and that the appointment of one now would only be to restore their former status. They argued further that the present situation gave the impression that Kamaran had been more or less taken over by Great Britain, and was bound to raise doubts in the mind of the Imam of the Yemen and others in regard to Great Britain's intentions with respect to that island. They thought that perhaps His Majesty's Government did not fully appreciate the good impression that would be made on the Imam by the appointment of an Italian doctor to the staff of the quarantine station.

SIR RONALD GRAHAM and SIR GILBERT CLAYTON maintained the point of view of His Majesty's Government, but stated that, of course, if the number of Italian pilgrims increased to an extent which might warrant the appointment of an Italian doctor on purely administrative lines, His Majesty's Government would be very willing to reconsider the question. It was agreed to leave this matter and, if the Italian representatives still maintained their point of view, to record it in the record of the conversations.

It was then decided that the conversations had now reached a stage at which Signor Gasparini and Sir Gilbert Clayton might discuss the text of an agreed record of the results which had been arrived at.

No. 17.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir R. Graham (Rome).

(No. 43.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, February 14, 1927.

BRITISH and Italian interests in Red Sea area.

Sir G. Clayton's report and text of alternative agreed records are now under consideration. I entirely agree with you and him that version omitting additional phrase should be accepted and signature completed, but I must obtain concurrence of other Departments interested. Please explain to Italian Government that necessity of inter-Departmental consultation inevitably involves a little delay.

You should also inform them, as a sign of our determination to consult and collaborate with them in every way possible, that, in order to avert suspicions in the mind of Ibn Saud, we informed him on 20th January that conversations were being held in Rome between representatives of the two Governments. He was told that these conversations were undertaken in order to avoid misunderstandings between the two Governments in the Red Sea area, where both countries have considerable interests, but that the result of them would in no way affect the Hejaz or the friendship towards himself of His Majesty's Government.

No. 18.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received February 19.)

(No. 38.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Rome, February 19, 1927.

YOUR telegram No. 43.

Italian Government thank you for the information, and will make similar declaration to Imam Yahya.

[E 1012/644/91]

No. 19.

Acting Consul Mayers to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received February 28.)

(No. 10. Secret.)

Sir,

Jeddah, February 5, 1927.

I have the honour to transmit herewith my report on the situation in the Hejaz during the period the 1st to the 31st January, 1927.

2. Copies of this report are being sent to Egypt, Jerusalem (2), Bagdad, Aden, Delhi, Beirut (for Damascus), Khartum (through Port Sudan) and Singapore.

I have, &c.

NORMAN MAYERS.

Enclosure in No. 19.

Jeddah Report for the Period January 1 to January 31, 1927.

THE most important event of the period under review has been the publication of an agreement, dated the 21st October, 1926, between Ibn Saud and the present ruling Idrisi, Sayyid Hassan. This "Mecca Agreement," which will be found as Appendix (A)* to this report, was published in the "Umm-el-Kura" of the 7th January. It caused general surprise, because, although everyone knew that Asir had awakened the appetite of both Ibn Saud and the Imam Yahya of the Yemen, the general impression was, in the Hejaz, that the first move would come from the latter.

2. Ibn Saud, by a regular treaty with Sayyid Hassan-el-Idrisi, has thus established his suzerainty over Asir. The internal government of the province is left in the hands of Sayyid Hassan; but war and peace, foreign policy, and defence from external aggression, even the faculty of granting commercial concessions, pass into the hands of Ibn Saud. The convention is dated the 14th of Rabi Akhar, 1345, and lest this date should puzzle London and Rome, the corresponding date, the 21st October, is added. In spite of appearances, the treaty must have been signed at different times, for on the 21st October last the signatories were several hundred miles apart. The comings and goings of Sheikh Murgani-el-Idrisi between Jizan and Jeddah had, no doubt, much to do with it. That servant of Islam, Ahmed Sherif-el-Senussi, gives the document, it will be noticed, his pontifical blessing. The lightheartedness reflected from Jizan in last month's report is now explained.

3. The agreement is very possibly a retort to the notorious fact that Italy is supplying arms and war-material to the Imam Yahya, and the signature of the Grand Senussi, who can be no friend to Italian expansion, lends support to the thesis. Nevertheless, Ibn Saud's claim to suzerainty over the Asir is not a new conception. In 1920 Ibn Saud played an obscurer part on the Arabian stage than he does at present. But, starting from the occupation of Ebha by his men in that year, an occupation which, after a temporary reverse, was renewed in 1922, there have been various indications of an intimacy of relations between Ibn Saud and Asir, although such relations were not perhaps mutually sought in the same degree. In more recent years the King's interferences in Asir affairs have been considerable. In June 1925 he openly wrote to this agency stating that he had been asked not only by the leading chiefs in Asir, but also by the Idrisi himself (at that time the present Sayyid Hassan), to take over the reins of government. He added that, for reasons of security on his southern frontier, and in order to preserve the balance of power in Asir and Yemen, he had instructed his commanding officer in Asir, i.e., in the northern region of Asir already under his sway, to occupy and to restore to peace and order, as the Idrisi had requested, the area which the latter might indicate. The present treaty, to be known as the "Mecca Agreement," thus rounds off an ambition of many years' standing. Unprotected, Asir was bound to fall, either to Ibn Saud or to the Yemen.

4. The fact that the Idrisi has definitely chosen Ibn Saud rather than the Imam Yahya as his protector shows that Ibn Saud's star is still in the ascendant. It is further interesting to note that the Idrisi, a chieftain whose temporal power, like that of the Senussi himself, has in part ecclesiastical origins, has not feared to

* Not printed.

accept the overlordship of the Wahabi leader. For him, obviously, Ibn Saud is, before anything else, King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd.

5. If Ibn Saud makes good his now legal claim to suzerainty over Asir, and succeeds in due course in getting his claim recognised by other Powers concerned, the new agreement is a distinct set-back to the spread northward of Italian influence in Arabia. A last point is worthy of notice. The treaty defines only in vague terms what is the territory of Asir (a State whose boundaries in the last ten years have shown remarkable elasticity), now placed under the guidance of Ibn Saud. It has not been possible so far to obtain further precisions, the former treaty of 1339 (1920) with Sayyid Mohammed-el-Idrisi not having been published. In any case, that treaty of 1339 is said not to define the Asir-Yemen marches. The present agreement does cover, however, the frontiers "which were, at that date, subject to the Idrisis," i.e., in 1339 (1920). In 1920, if I am not mistaken, the Idrisis held Hodeida, now in the hands of the Imam Yahya.

6. The Mecca Agreement is, therefore, in a sense, a challenge to the Imam Yahya, and, on the face of things, would make it appear inevitable that a collision will, sooner or later, occur between Ibn Saud and the principal surviving rival, apart from the Sultan of Muscat and Oman, to his sovereignty in the Arabian Peninsula. But, on the other hand, it is fairly certain that at the present juncture Ibn Saud has no desire to attack the Imam, and that it would be a distinct departure from his usual wise and cautious procedure to do so. Further, there may be between these two rulers some such pact of partition a suggestion of which was reported by the Political Resident at Aden in paragraph 1 of his news letter No. 2, dated the 28th February, 1925. According to that report, the Imam recognises Ibn Saud's territory as coming as far south as the Wadi Mur, near Loheiya, while Ibn Saud, for his part, acknowledged all the country to the south, including Hodeida, to be the territory of the Imam. The lack of noticeable excitement in official circles here would make some such arrangement seem very probable.

7. But, even if Asir is not for the present to bring Ibn Saud and the Imam into serious conflict, there is in the new agreement alone no guarantee of peace for the future, unless the King of the Hejaz and the Imam Yahya of the Yemen are permanently reconciled. There are herein many matters between the two rulers which need adjustment. If there is to be no real peace, the present treaty puts into the hands of Ibn Saud an instrument which he knows exceedingly well how to utilise, when the right time comes, for giving a moral foundation to any expansionist scheme southwards he may decide upon.

8. As regards relations with Transjordan, the Hejaz-Nejd delegate to the tribunal to be set up under the Hadda Agreement, Abdul Aziz-bin-Zeid, left Jeddah on the 20th January for Jerusalem. The Hejaz authorities, as far as can be seen, realise the delicate situation which arose at the last meeting and which led to its failure, and appear desirous that this second meeting should have better success. They claim that Nejd and Hejaz have lost a considerable number of camels in the various frontier raids still unliquidated.

9. With reference to paragraph 23 of my report for October last, this agency has now notified the Hejaz Government, on behalf of the Government of the Sudan, that all intending pilgrims from Fellata settlements in the Sudan are being informed of the new Hejaz regulations to the effect that they will only be allowed to land at Jeddah, that they must carry regular papers, and that they should be in possession of funds sufficient for their maintenance while on the haj. It is hoped that the main stream of Tadrari pilgrims will now flow naturally along the Suakin-Jeddah steamship route. Such a circumstance, coupled with the stricter requirements obtaining on this side, will undoubtedly make for the pilgrims' greater comfort and security.

10. Switzerland has formally recognised Ibn Saud as King of the Hejaz.

11. Ibn Saud has been, during the whole of January, in Riyadh, which he reached by motor-car almost direct from Medina, not visiting Hail as was proposed. The return of their Sultan to the tribesmen of his eastern dominions will in all probability improve the situation in Nejd. No hint has reached Jeddah of really serious trouble there, the nursery of Ibn Saud's power; but it is known that the King's old supporters have sometimes, with their customary frankness, expressed to Ibn Saud their naïve surprise at the extent to which, since he left them, he has erred and strayed from the Way. They ask why the dome of the Prophet's tomb has not been destroyed; why he tolerates telegraphs and telephones; why he allows motor-cars to pollute the virgin face of the desert; why Christians are still

permitted in the Hejaz; and why the Christian representatives have not been turned out of Jeddah. They further ask him to abolish customs dues, no sanction for which can be found in holy writ, and to prohibit the entry of the Egyptian Mahmal this year.

12. I am told that a debate was engaged recently in Mecca with a party of these roundheads by the Kadi of Mecca, who has himself been foremost in destroying domes over tombs. He explained to them that the Prophet's tomb at Medina had powerful protectors outside Arabia, who might take dire vengeance if it were destroyed; further, the dome was very high, too high for worshippers to reach and touch idolatrously. With regard to telegraphs and telephones, the party were told that, since their Sultan had occupied the Holy Places, he had become great in the eyes of the world and needed to communicate with his representatives and subjects abroad. As for the foreign representatives and consuls, they were useful for helping the King to discover what the Powers felt and intended towards him. Lastly, customs duties purified goods imported from abroad; without the revenue accruing from them, the King would not only reluctantly be forced to raise revenue from his tribes, but would also be unable to pay the periodic donations to them it pleased him to make.

13. I have joined to this report as Appendix (B)* a free translation of an article from the official "Umm-el-Kura" on the benefits of Ibn Saud's rule in the Hejaz. The article, contributed by presumably a private person, may be nothing more than a piece of official enthusiasm. But it contains a good deal of what is true, and is possibly of interest.

14. It is announced that, as the Hejaz and Nejd have joined the Postal Union, registered letters, money orders and parcels may now be addressed to this country.

15. Up to the end of January about 20,000 hajis have arrived in the Hejaz on pilgrimage.

16. During the period under review four slaves have been assisted to return to Africa.

NORMAN MAYERS.

[E 827/119/91]

No. 20.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 577.)

My Lord Marquess,

Foreign Office, March 1, 1927.

YOUR Excellency will be aware that negotiations were recently entered into between the British agent and consul at Jeddah and His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd, with a view to the settlement of various questions outstanding between that ruler and His Majesty's Government.

2. In the course of those negotiations, which have been suspended to enable the British delegates to return and report to His Majesty's Government, Ibn Saud urged on His Majesty's consul the desirability of reconditioning the Hejaz Railway at an early date, if possible, before the coming pilgrimage. He then proceeded to explain his own attitude in regard to this question generally, and to make certain proposals as to the method by which the object he had in mind might be achieved. In the first place, he expressed the view that he was entitled to demand the restitution to himself of those sections of the railway which lie in Syria, Palestine and Transjordan on the grounds that the railway was the acknowledged property of the Moslem world and that the Hejaz Government were the sole authority in whom the administration of pan-Islamic property could properly be vested. His Majesty's consul explained to Ibn Saud that this was a matter which involved the French Government as well as His Majesty's Government, and reminded him, in this connection, of the declaration made jointly by His Majesty's Government and the French Government at Lausanne in 1923, the text of which had already been formally communicated to Ibn Saud. His Majesty's consul further explained that it would serve no useful purpose to suggest that the administration of the sections of the railway lying in mandated territory should be handed over by the mandatory Powers to a foreign Government.

3. While not departing from the view he had already expressed, Ibn Saud agreed that no useful purpose would be served by continuing the discussion of general principles. Before, however, turning to the practical aspects of the question, he wished

* Not printed.

to point out that the Hejaz had not been a party to the Lausanne Declaration of 1923, and that he desired it to be known that the Hejaz Government reserved its freedom in regard to the contents of that declaration. At the same time he wished to impress upon His Majesty's Government the obvious desirability of putting the railway into running order before the coming pilgrimage, if possible; and with this object he would request His Majesty's Government to place at once at the disposal of the Hejaz Government a sufficient sum of money and an adequate quantity of rolling-stock to enable it to repair the Hejazian section of the line and organise a train service against the coming pilgrimage, it being understood that this sum would be treated as an advance on account pending a final settlement of the whole question.

4. As you are aware, His Majesty's Government have for long regarded it as desirable that the Hejaz Railway should be reconditioned as soon as possible, and their views in that respect therefore correspond with those expressed by Ibn Saud. They have, moreover, already agreed upon a plan with the French Government for achieving this object (see your despatch No. 1648 of the 31st August, 1926, and previous correspondence). Under that plan, as soon as the redistribution of the rolling-stock between Palestine and Syria had been arranged, His Majesty's Government and the French Government were jointly to approach Ibn Saud with the request that he would repair that portion of the railway which lies within the Hejaz and is at present unfit for service, viz., the section between El Ala and Mudawarra. In return, Ibn Saud was to be informed that His Majesty's Government and the French Government would guarantee an adequate service as far as the frontier of the Hejaz, to link up with whatever service he might establish on the section under his control. It was further to be suggested to Ibn Saud that, if agreement were reached in principle, a meeting should be held either at Maan or at Amman between the local experts from Syria, Palestine, Transjordan and the Hejaz to arrange for co-operation in the maintenance of a train service throughout the whole length of the Hejaz Railway.

5. It has hitherto not proved possible to give effect to the scheme described above pending the settlement of the subsidiary question of the redistribution of locomotives and rolling-stock between the sections of the Hejaz Railway lying in Syria and Palestine respectively.

6. You will, however, observe from Colonial Office letter of the 19th February, a copy of which is enclosed herein,* that the question of the redistribution of locomotives and rolling-stock has now been satisfactorily disposed of as a result of an agreement between the competent authorities in Syria and Palestine.

7. It is clearly impossible, at this late date, to complete the arrangements necessary to render the whole railway available for this year's pilgrimage, which will take place in June next. I shall, however, be glad if you will inform the French Government of the substance of Ibn Saud's discussion with His Majesty's consul as described above, and at the same time request that they will join with His Majesty's Government in giving effect to the scheme already agreed upon between them and His Majesty's Government, in order to prepare the way for a conference of the three parties with a view to arranging that the railway shall be in working order before the 1928 pilgrimage season—a matter of interest to all concerned.

I am, &c.

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

No. 21.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received March 2.)

(No. 46. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.)

Rome, March 2, 1927.

YOUR telegram No. 43.

In spite of my explanations Ministry for Foreign Affairs are becoming anxious and Minister for Colonies suspicious over delay in completion of signature. They have addressed several enquiries to me on the subject. No doubt General Clayton will have told you that Italian negotiators always had Karaman Islands at the back of their minds, and I am apprehensive of this question being raised in an acute form if we have to embark on further discussions.

* Not printed.

No. 22.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir R. Graham (Rome).

(No. 59.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, March 2, 1927.

MY telegram No. 43 of 14th February: British and Italian interests in the Red Sea area.

You may complete the signature of the agreed record, omitting the phrase in paragraph 4 to which the Italian representatives took exception.

[E 1240/18/91]

No. 23.

Agreements communicated by Acting Consul Mayers, Jeddah, February 18 (received March 14); and Letters communicated under Cairo Despatch No. 61 of February 9 (received February 21).

(1.)

Port Sudan-Jeddah Cable Agreement.

IT is hereby agreed between the Sudan Government on the one part and the Hejaz Government on the other part, His Britannic Majesty's Government being, in view of their friendly relations with the Hejaz Government and their position in the Sudan, a third and assenting party at the request of those two Governments, as follows:—

1. That the cable formerly known as the Jeddah-Suakin Cable and now known as the Port Sudan-Jeddah Cable shall become as from the first day of January, 1926, the joint property of the Sudan and Hejaz Governments.
2. That the unexpended balance of £ E. 33,501.149 m/ms. standing to the credit of the cable account as at the 31st December, 1925, and as shown by the statements prepared and certified by the Sudan Government shall be divided equally between the Sudan and Hejaz Governments.
3. That the parties to this agreement shall, in order to facilitate the better working of the cable, authorise the Eastern Telegraph Company (Limited) to work and maintain the cable communication between Jeddah and Port Sudan under an agreement to be concluded between that Company and the Sudan and Hejaz Governments jointly.
4. That as from the 1st January, 1926, until such date as the cable is taken over by the Eastern Telegraph Company (Limited), the Hejaz Government undertakes to settle all sums due by that Government in respect of messages transmitted via Port Sudan during this period, or such sums shall be deducted from the half share of the unexpended balance payable to the Hejaz Government under this agreement.

For and on behalf of the Sudan
Government,
J. L. MAFFEY.

For and on behalf of the Hejaz
Government,
FEISAL ABDUL AZIZ-AL-SAUD.
(Signed in Arabic.)

For and on behalf of His Britannic Majesty's Government,
S. R. JORDAN.

December 18, 1926.

(2.)

It is hereby agreed between the Sudan and Hejaz Governments, hereafter called the Joint Owners, on the one part, and the Eastern Telegraph Company (Limited), hereafter called the Company, on the other part, as follows:—

1. That both the terminals of the Port Sudan-Jeddah Cable, hereafter called the cable, shall be worked (subject to the reservations in article 9 of this agreement), and the cable maintained and kept in good repair by the Company free of charge to the Joint Owners for a period of twenty-five years.
2. That this agreement shall be subject to two years' notice of termination, which may be given at any time after the first two years by the Joint Owners or by the Company.
3. The parties to this agreement agree that a charge of not more 1 fr. 50 c gold shall be payable in respect of each word transmitted over the cable including both terminal charges, and of this charge the sum of 1 fr. 25 c. gold shall, subject to clause 12 hereof, accrue to the Company, who will deal directly with the public in Port Sudan, and the balance of 35 centimes gold shall accrue to the Hejaz Government in respect of services in dealing direct with the public in Jeddah.
4. The Company agrees to accept half the cable rate in respect of all Sudan and Hejaz Government telegrams transmitted over the cable.
5. The charges and/or apportionments as set out in article 3 shall be liable to revision after a period of two years from the date of this agreement.
6. The Hejaz Government undertakes not to use for foreign communications its own wireless or cables or the wireless or cables of any other company, and the Company on its part undertakes to secure the communications by wireless in case the cable is out of order. Should the Company be unable to do so, the Hejaz Government will be free to operate its own communications in any way it may find convenient during the period the cable is not working.
7. The Sudan Government undertakes not to use wireless between the Sudan and the Hejaz in competition with the cable.
8. The Hejaz Government agrees to exempt from sanitary, harbour or other dues any cable ship of the Company entering Hejaz waters, and to allow the free importation of all materials landed for the repairs or extension of the cable.
9. In consideration of the fact that the Hejaz Government is anxious to avoid any arrangement which might be construed as foreign interference or intervention in Hejaz local affairs, the Company agree that the Jeddah terminal shall be worked by the Hejaz Postal and Telegraph Administration, and the Company shall be liable for the salaries of not more than two of the employees of that administration, the total amount of which shall not exceed the sum of £20 sterling per month. In consideration of this agreement the Hejaz Government agree to invite not more than two persons of the Mahometan faith, to be nominated by the Company, to be employed in the Hejaz Postal and Telegraph Administration for a period not exceeding six months in order that the Hejaz Administration may become acquainted with the routine and procedure of the Company; and during this period of six months the Company shall be liable in respect of the salaries of the persons so nominated only. All salaries are to be paid by the Hejaz Administration and debited to the Company.
10. The parties to this agreement undertake to submit and settle all accounts monthly.
11. The Company agrees to hand back the cable to the Joint Owners upon the expiration of this agreement in good order, having regard to the present condition of the cable.
12. Nothing in this agreement shall absolve the Company from paying to the Sudan Government the sum of 25 centimes gold per word for all messages from the Hejaz passing over the Sudan Government telegraphs.
13. The present agreement has been drawn up in two languages, English and Arabic, and both texts shall have equal validity. But in the event of any dispute arising owing to a divergence between the two texts, such dispute shall be submitted to His Britannic Majesty's Government and the

Government of the Hejaz and settled through the usual diplomatic channels.

For and on behalf of the Hejaz
Government,
FEISAL ABDUL AZIZ-AL-SAUD.
(Signed in Arabic.)

For and on behalf of the Sudan
Government,
J. L. MAFFEY.

For and on behalf of the Eastern Telegraph Company (Limited),
J. E. BROADBENT.

December 18, 1926.

(3.)

Abdul Aziz Ibn Abdul Rahman-al-Faisal-al-Saud to the Governor-General of the Sudan.

(Translation.)

As it is desirable to reserve the freedom of action of each of the Governments of the Sudan and the Hejaz in the agreement to be concluded between them as first party and the Eastern Telegraph Company as second party (Port Sudan-Jeddah Cable Agreement), the Hejaz Government holds that, in respect of clause 2 of the agreement between the two Governments themselves, the Sudan Government should be at full liberty to demand the termination of the agreement if they have any valid reason justifying (in their view) such demand, and that in such case the Hejaz Government shall not only not be entitled to oppose the demand to terminate, but shall associate themselves with the Sudan Government and jointly demand from the company the termination of the agreement. If, therefore, your Government were to reply recognising the same right to the Hejaz Government, namely, that the Hejaz Government may, whenever they find valid reason which appears to them to justify the termination of the agreement, represent the matter to the Sudan Government, and the Sudan Government shall then consent to the demand of the Hejaz Government for the termination of the agreement and shall jointly with the Hejaz Government require from the company the termination of the agreement in accordance with the stipulations laid down therein (that is to say, to send a notification to the company that the agreement will terminate on the expiration of two years from the date of notification).

In the event of your consenting to this reciprocal undertaking and of your agreeing to consider this letter of ours and your own reply of assent as authoritative texts having the same validity as the clauses of the agreement, we should be prepared to accept the agreement as drawn up and take steps to bring it into effect.

Respects.

(Sealed)

ABDUL AZIZ IBN SAUD.

10th Jumada Thani, 1345.

(December 15, 1926.)

(4.)

Governor-General of the Sudan to His Majesty the King of the Hejaz.

Khartum, January 19, 1927.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Majesty's despatch, dated 10 Jumada Thani 1345, relative to certain modifications in the agreement to be concluded with the Eastern Telegraph Company.

2. I note that your Majesty's Government holds that, in respect of clause 2 of the agreement between the two Governments themselves, the Sudan Government should be at full liberty to demand the termination of the agreement, if they have any valid reason justifying (in their view) such demand, and that in such case the Hejaz Government shall not only not be entitled to oppose the demand to terminate but shall associate themselves with the Sudan Government and jointly demand from the company the termination of the agreement.

3. I understand further that your Majesty is desirous of reserving the same right to the Hejaz Government, namely, that the Hejaz Government may, whenever they find valid reason justifying (in their view) such demand, be at full liberty to

demand the termination of the agreement, and that in such case the Sudan Government shall not only *not* be entitled to oppose the demand to terminate but shall associate themselves with the Hejaz Government and jointly demand from the company the termination of the agreement.

4. I have the honour to inform your Majesty that I agree to this reciprocal undertaking, as set out in paragraphs 2 and 3 above, and I agree to consider Your Majesty's despatch (above referred to) and this reply as authoritative texts, having the same validity as the clauses of the agreement.

5. I note that, subject to the above conditions, your Majesty's Government will be prepared to accept the agreements as drawn up and take steps to bring it into effect.

6. I have now signed on behalf of the Sudan Government the Ownership Agreement (between the Hejaz Government and the Sudan Government and His Britannic Majesty's Government as a third and assenting party thereto at the request of the two contracting Governments).

7. I have also signed on behalf of the Sudan Government the Working Agreement (between the Hejaz and Sudan Governments, as joint owners, and the Eastern Telegraph Company, Limited), and have transmitted this latter document to the Eastern Telegraph Company, Limited, for their signature.

Please accept, &c.

J. L. MAFFEY.

No. 24.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Mr. Mayers (Jeddah).

(No. 6.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, March 14, 1927.

I THINK it desirable that treaty negotiations interrupted last December should be resumed as soon as practicable after Ibn Saud's return from Riahd to Mecca or Jeddah.

You should make a communication in this sense so soon as you can get into touch with him. You should add that I have invited Sir G. Clayton to take charge of the negotiations and that he will be accompanied by Mr. Jordan and Mr. Antonius.

Please reply urgently, giving date convenient to His Majesty.

No. 25.

Acting Agent, Jeddah, to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received March 18.)

(No. 5.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Jeddah, March 18, 1927.

YOUR telegram No. 6.

I am getting into touch with Ibn Saud, through Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, but do not expect His Majesty's reply before the end of March. It is supposed that Ibn Saud will be back in the Hejaz about the middle of April, but nothing definite is known.

[E 1369/22/91]

No. 26.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received March 21.)

(No. 195.)

Sir,

Rome, March 11, 1927.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 59 of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith, in original, the signed texts, in English and Italian, of the record of the conversations between the representatives of the Italian Government, Brigadier-General Sir Gilbert Clayton and myself, relative to British and Italian interests in Southern Arabia and the Red Sea.

2. Copies of the two texts are also enclosed.

I have, &c.

R. GRAHAM.

Enclosure in No. 26

Record of Conversations which have taken place in Rome between His Excellency the Right Hon. Sir Ronald Graham, G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador in Rome, and Brigadier-General Sir Gilbert Clayton, K.C.M.G., K.B.E., C.B., on behalf of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and His Excellency Il Cavaliere Jacopo Gasparini, Governor of Eritrea, and His Excellency Il Grand'Uff. Raffaele Guariglia, Director-General at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the Italian Government.

THE above-mentioned delegates have, under instructions from their respective Governments, discussed certain questions regarding British and Italian interests in Southern Arabia and the Red Sea.

The delegates, acting under their instructions that the respective policies of the two Governments in Southern Arabia and the Red Sea should be pursued in a spirit of friendly co-operation and developed on parallel though independent lines, have reached the conclusion that their Governments are in agreement on the following points:—

1. That it is in the common interest of the two Governments to pursue a policy of pacification in order to avoid so far as possible conflicts between the various Arab chiefs.

2. That such influence as the two Governments may be in a position to exercise respectively with Ibn Saud, the Imam Yahia and the Idrisi of Asir, should be directed towards eliminating causes of conflict in order to arrive, if possible, at pacific and friendly settlements between those chiefs.

3. That while continuing to exert their influence in the cause of peace, the two Governments should not intervene in any conflict which, despite the efforts of the two Governments towards pacification, may break out between those chiefs.

4. That the guiding principle in British policy in the Red Sea is the security of imperial communications with India and the East. For this purpose His Britannic Majesty's Government regard it as a vital imperial interest that no European Power should establish itself on the Arabian shore of the Red Sea, and more particularly on Kamaran or the Farsan Islands, and that neither Kamaran nor the Farsan Islands shall fall into the hands of an unfriendly Arab ruler.

That, on the other hand, it is the interest of Italy, in view of her possessions on the western coast of the Red Sea, that no European Power should establish itself on the Arabian shore of the Red Sea, or on Kamaran or the Farsan Islands, and that neither Kamaran nor the Farsan Islands should fall into the hands of an unfriendly Arab ruler.

5. That there should be economic and commercial freedom on the Arabian coast and the islands of the Red Sea for citizens and subjects of the two countries and that the protection which such citizens and subjects may legitimately expect from their respective Governments should not assume a political character or complexion.

6. That the presence of British officials at Kamaran is solely for the purpose of securing the sanitary service of the pilgrimage to Mecca, but that for administrative reasons His Britannic Majesty's Government do not consider it possible at present to agree to the Italian request for the participation of an Italian doctor in the quarantine service. But since the Italian Government maintain their point of view in this matter, His Britannic Majesty's Government are disposed to reconsider the question when the number of pilgrims originating in Italian colonies or possessions increases to such an extent as better to justify the presence of an Italian doctor.

7. That it is in the common interest of the two Governments to use their respective influence with the Arab chiefs in such a manner as to safeguard as far as may be possible the mutual interests of Italy and Great Britain, and that, therefore, it is desirable that the two Governments should maintain close touch with each other in all questions affecting the Red Sea and Southern Arabia, in order to avoid misunderstandings between them or misapprehensions on the part of the Arab chiefs in regard to the policies which the two Governments intend to follow in the above-mentioned areas.

RONALD GRAHAM.

GILBERT CLAYTON.

GASPARINI.

GUARIGLIA.

Rome the 7th day of February, 1927.

[E 1370/22/91]

No. 27.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received March 21.)

(No. 220.)

Sir,

Rome, March 18, 1927.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 56 of the 24th January last, I have the honour to report that the decree-law approving the treaty between Italy and the Yemen has, in accordance with the usual procedure, been presented to the Chamber of Deputies for conversion into law.

2. In his written report accompanying the Bill, Signor Mussolini observes that this treaty is the outcome of long and persevering efforts for the extension and consolidation of Italian relations with the Arab countries on the Red Sea coast. The Yemen has, through its geographical position, always been the best market, almost the natural hinterland, of Eritrea. With the increase of Italian activity in connection with Arabia it was found desirable to give official recognition to the connection with the Yemen in a form which would at the same time constitute a recognition of the full and absolute independence of that country and of its ruler. The work of Italy, based as it is on a loyal friendship for the Arab countries, and on the maintenance of peace between them, could not fail finally to secure the warm approval of the inhabitants of the Yemen and of the Imam, whose political power was now for the first time affirmed in an international instrument.

I have, &c.

R. GRAHAM.

[E 1488/644/91]

No. 28.

Acting Consul Mayers to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received March 28.)

(No. 23. Secret.)

Sir,

Jeddah, March 8, 1927.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith my report on the situation in the Hejaz during the period the 1st to the 28th February, 1927.

2. Copies of this report are being sent to Egypt, Jerusalem (2), Bagdad, Aden, Delhi, Beirut (for Damascus), Khartum (through Port Sudan) and Singapore.

I have, &c.

NORMAN MAYERS.

Enclosure in No. 28.

Jeddah Report for the period February 1 to February 28, 1927.

(Secret.)

THE King has remained in Nejd during the whole of February. His Majesty's absence has slowed down affairs in the Hejaz, and has certainly increased the difficulty of transacting affairs with the Hejaz-Nejd Government. Riyadh has no doubt been accessible by means of wireless communications and speedy couriers to the queries, problems and news submitted to Ibn Saud by his own subordinates in Mecca. But it has been quite another matter for the foreign representatives in Jeddah, who have had to find a substitute for the helpful personal contact maintained between them and the King when the latter is in the Hejaz.

2. Simultaneously with Ibn Saud's departure for Nejd in January, Dr. Abdullah Damluji, Director of Foreign Affairs, obtained from his master leave to spend two months with his family in Hofuf, where, as he describes in his recently published book, Major Cheeseman met him in obscurer days in 1923. On Dr. Abdullah Damluji's departure, Sheikh Yussef Yassin took over duties as Acting Director, and it has been with him that practically all ordinary business affecting general British interests has been transacted during the interval.

3. Sheikh Yussef Yassin is a young man of intelligence, but of discursive and argumentative mentality, who formerly sought his fortune with the Arab Government in Damascus, he being by birth a Syrian and by persuasion a Nationalist. He came subsequently to the Hejaz, and when, after the fall of Mecca in 1924, Ibn Saud

founded his newspaper the "Umm-el-Kura," Sheikh Yussef was made its editor. He is not to be blamed for his peregrinations, in that his inclinations and aspirations are obviously pan-Arab. On the other hand, the narrow cast of his views and his extraordinary methods, so different from the frank directness of his master, have doubled the difficulty of relations. A suspicion or an abstract idea will dart across the current of his thought in the transaction of most ordinary and straightforward business and divert the course of talk completely. When the King is present Sheikh Yussef sits before him meekly, like the mere scribe he is. But with the direction of affairs in the Hejaz left in his hands by the King's absence he has proved a very Iago. The Emir Feisal, the King's nominal representative, has been completely effaced. Often, the only effective means of checking Sheikh Yussef's genius for obstructive thought has been a hint that his master, when he returns, may not altogether be too pleased at his petty management.

4. His methods are unpleasant. He is, for example, engaged at present in a battle with the local agents of the Khedivial Mail Line for quarantine dues on a batch of Egyptian pilgrims who arrived in the Hejaz on last year's pilgrimage. The Egyptian Government, in accordance with their own regulations, received these dues in advance before ever the pilgrims left their own country, and are therefore debtor in this respect to the Hejaz Government. One would have thought that this was a simple matter, easily arranged between the two Governments concerned. Not so Sheikh Yussef Yassin; his method is to press the Khedivial Mail Line agents in Jeddah in order to make them advance the money themselves and take their chance of recovering it subsequently from the Egyptian Government. He has even gone so far as to express a foolish threat, which, however, not even Sheikh Yussef Yassin would be blindly consistent enough to carry out, to detain the next Khedivial pilgrim ship unless his demands are met. He made this threat unofficially on the telephone to the Khedivial agent, and when asked to repeat it backed out.

5. Similarly, when the Eastern Telegraph Company's ship the "Mirror" came to Jeddah to carry out the repair of the Jeddah-Port Sudan submarine cable, he made an attempt to hold up her work until he had received through this agency a definite promise from the Sudan Government to pay by a given date the sums due to the Hejaz in respect of certain accumulations of cable fees. These sums were mentioned in the Cable Agreement, and were therefore due the moment the agreement was signed by all parties. But, either suspecting that a promise to pay did not exactly and literally mean a promise to pay, or desiring quick payment in order to tide over some financial strait, or simply working with a commendable view to pleasing his master by a show of promptitude, he insisted on dragging the immediate payment of this money into the question of the cable ship's operations, and refused to allow the ship to begin until the Sudan Government's promise had been received.

6. Such an ultimatum had to be opposed and Sheikh Yussef brought to realise that highway methods are not always successful. I assured him that I would personally do my best to secure a speedy payment of the sums legally due, but refused to be party to an indecorous attempt to make the Sudan Government (who were, meanwhile, unconscious of Sheikh Yussef's pistol-play), put up their hands by a given date. This was not sufficient. An appeal was therefore made to the Emir Feisal, who agreed at once that, so soon after the agreement had been signed, the Sudan Government would hardly expect that the "Mirror" would be delayed like a hostage in Jeddah Harbour. Sheikh Yussef's manoeuvre collapsed forthwith; and when I met him soon after the ship had commenced operations, he seemed almost glad that it had.

7. There is something of the knave and something of the tactician in Sheikh Yussef Yassin. But it would probably be wrong to condemn him altogether. He has not yet really had his chance. When he gets it, or rather, when he reaches the security he is at present striving hard for, he may develop into a less irritating negotiator, and show less fear of, and therefore less hostility to, the outside world. A little tolerance would greatly improve his tenacity and soften his lean and hungry nature.

8. Mention has been made in recent reports of the Syrian influence in Mecca. (See, for example, paragraphs 11-13 of the report for October 1926.) Such influence undoubtedly exists, and might under circumstances favourable to itself, conceivably develop into an important factor in Ibn Saud's policy, a bias tending to direct his thoughts in the direction of Syria, Palestine and Trans-Jordan. Sheikh Yussef Yassin speaks in the bitterest terms of the Emir Abdullah. On the other hand, there are considerations automatically redressing the bias. In the first place,

although Ibn Saud cannot help but be influenced by the persons who supply him with advice and information, the King's policy remains strongly a personal one. That policy must at the present time be chiefly concerned with internal affairs and with affairs touching Asir and the Yemen.

9. In the second place, the Syrian influence, only partial as it is, has in the Hejaz itself enemies whose exasperation has been increased by the prominence into which Sheikh Yussef Yassin has sprung since the King's absence. One night, some time ago, there appeared on the walls of the post office in Mecca a large notice asking why Syrians should rule the Hejaz and why Hejaz money should be drained to Nejd. The notice contained a warning to the Syrians to wrap their throats up well before going to bed. The chief of police has scoured Mecca by night in disguise in search of the authors of this manifesto, but neither he nor his agents have been successful. The threatened Syrian Vespers has not materialised, and is unlikely to do so. In fact, on the King's return, the importance of this melodramatic episode will disappear along with the deflated prestige of the persons menaced.

10. It is, however, clear that the Syrians are unloved and resented. Equal discontent is felt at the distribution in Nejd of gold drawn from the Hejaz. Early in February Ibn Saud had the considerable sum of £50,000 sent urgently to Riyadh from the Hejaz treasury, and it was widely known that the money would be spent in the entertainment and subsidy of the Hejdzian chieftains.

11. Ibn Saud has been devoting himself to the affairs of these old associates of his while he has been in Riyadh. A certain discontent among them was reflected in paragraphs 11 and 12 of last month's report. Further details of the movement show that there is in Nejd a loosely associated group of men who, formerly Ibn Saud's friends and lieutenants, will not be satisfied merely to devote the rest of their lives to the uncritical obedience of his behests. Among these independent spirits are Shereef Khalid-bin-Mansour, Governor of Taraba and Khurma, who was instrumental in capturing Taif and Mecca from the Hashimite forces in 1924; Sheikh Sultan-bin-Bijad, of the Ateibah, associated with Khalid in the above exploits; and Sheikh Feisal-el-Derwish, principal sheikh of the Mutair, perhaps the best known of the Nejdian sheikhs, who commanded for Ibn Saud for a time before Medina. In sympathy to a certain extent with these former allies and present subjects of the King is said to be the Emir Mohammed, Ibn Saud's own brother. He is married to a daughter of one of them, Sultan-bin-Bijad, and his independence of character is in harmony with theirs. He was up to a short time ago in Riyadh. Ibn Saud's long absence in the Hejaz and their own unemployment in Nejd have furnished these chiefs with the time to formulate and the opportunity to discuss their grievances. It is not supposed here that they are ready to betray the King or that they have ceased to respect his authority, but they are frankly critical. Their attitude was one of the urgent reasons which took Ibn Saud back to Riyadh. From all accounts the King knows well how, by a combination of the generosity and firmness associated with his name, to keep his turbulent friends in Nejd in check. It becomes again strikingly apparent how personal a matter is the homogeneity of the dominion of Nejd and Hejaz.

12. If tribal affairs are the chief preoccupation of the moment, there are signs that the next big problem to be developed will be the question of Asir. Newspaper reports of the conversations in Rome between Sir Gilbert Clayton and Commendatore Gasperini, negotiator of the Italo-Yemen Treaty, have not been lost on the local authorities. They give the impression of resenting the feared intrusion into the politics of Asir of any Power other than the Yemen and themselves, and are apprehensive as to what Italian intentions in South-West Arabia are.

13. Reference has been made above to the Jeddah-Port Sudan cable. The agreement defining the terms of its joint ownership by the Sudan and Hejaz Governments was signed for the Hejaz Government on the 18th December, 1926, and by the Governor-General of the Sudan in January. Subsequently, the working agreement confiding the operation of the cable to the Eastern Telegraph Company was similarly completed by the signatures of the Sudan Government and of the operating company. Early in February the Eastern Telegraph Company's ship "Mirror" carried out the repair work necessary on the cable in Jeddah roadstead, and by the 15th February cable communication with Port Sudan was definitely re-established.

14. Dr. Weiss, German Minister in Abyssinia, arrived in Jeddah on the 18th February and stayed with the Dutch consul until the 25th February, when he left for Port Sudan on his way back to Addis Ababa. The purpose of his tour in the Red Sea area may be conjectured as a cursory commercial and political enquiry

suggested to his Government by recent British and Italian activities. Dr. Weiss said he thought it would be wrong to conclude that the whole trade of the Yemen would now fall into Italian hands, and did not see why British and German enterprise should not have a share in it also. He quoted as an instance that in six months the Italian monopoly of the supply of kerosene to Hodeida would fall in, and thought that there was no special reason for its being renewed to an Italian firm.

15. It has been surprising to find to what extent local interest has been aroused in the Chinese question, and more especially in the British attitude to it. Hankow and Shanghai have been discussed among the merchants of Jeddah and the citizens of Mecca with far more feeling than one would be led by the money-making preoccupations of the ones and the piety-mongering of the others to suppose likely. Even the official "Umm-el-Kura" considered itself entitled to publish a leading article on the situation, and did so in quite accurate and friendly terms. But there is, in fact, little room to be surprised at such an interest, a sign of the times. What could be more natural than that, in the one metropolis in the world (excepting the remoter Lhasa), from which Europe is definitely excluded, where Kashghari, Tartar, Javanese, Indian, Syrian and Moroccan meet with the sons of Ham and the sons of Shem, talk should fix on fundamental problems of the day deeply affecting, whether he realises it or not, each one of the disputants?

16. The "Umm-el-Kura" of the 15th contained the following official notification:—

"The newspaper 'Al Ahram' published in its number of the 28th November, 1926, an article taken from the 'Journal des Débats' entitled 'Javanese Communists and the Dutch Legation in Egypt.' It said that the Dutch Legation over a year ago wrote a report, since proved to be true, to the effect that the members of the Bolshevik Agency in Jeddah are working to spread the spirit of communism among Moslem pilgrims and are distributing revolutionary literature among them.

"As such news is untrue, and as the Hejaz Government is satisfied that no such (Bolshevik) activities exist in all the Hejaz, the Hejaz Government wrote to the Dutch Government through the Dutch consul in Jeddah requesting that enquiries be made into the source of this false rumour.

"The reply of the Dutch consul has now been received, after proper investigation. He denies the whole matter, and states that neither the Dutch Legation in Egypt nor any member of its staff has made a report in that sense.

"The news, therefore, is quite false."

The notification appears at first sight to be a kindly pat on the back for the Soviet agency in Jeddah. But it has other interpretations. It can also be read as a warning to the Russians, and as a reassurance to the different Powers whose nationals visit the Hejaz for the pilgrimage.

17. A number of improvements in pilgrim arrangements have been decided upon, and will be found in an appendix. They are intended to ameliorate conditions at Arafat, the goal of the Haj, and at Muna, where sacrificial ceremonies and the symbolical stoning of the Devil take place. They are consequent on the criticisms heard at the Islamic Conference in Mecca last year. It will remain to be seen whether they are put into effect. However, as a committee has been appointed and money set aside for the purpose, it looks as though something is now being done.

18. The pilgrim road between Jeddah and Mecca has hitherto sufficed for both animal and mechanical transport. But motor conveyance has developed to such an extent that the Hejaz Government has decided to separate the two, and has marked out an alternative route to Mecca for motor vehicles, leaving the old broad, beaten track to camel caravans, ambling mules and striding pedestrians. So Kipling was right in the tag, and never the twain shall meet. Along the new route will ply many types of motor conveyances, but chiefly touring cars of the Ford, Chevrolet and Fiat order, and a considerable number of motor lorries, converted to carry fifteen to a dozen passengers. The aristocrat of the last-named class is a new twenty-five passenger charabanc, a Spa, imported for the use of the King's entourage. It is intended to send this latest product of civilisation to Riyadh in the near future. If it gets there and back safely, and proves its worth on a sandy track, the next few years may see Javanese pilgrims touring to Mecca as comfortably as, for 5s. 6d. from Southampton Row, the stereotyped American sees the sights of London. Motor conveyance between Jeddah and the Holy City (which the cars do not enter), is now definitely established. There would probably be a similar limited development

between Jeddah, Medina and Mecca, if it were not for the lack of halting-places *en route* and the hostility of the Bedouin population to the new form of transport, which threatens their camels and their livelihood.

19. A wireless station has been opened at Rabigh, and private messages for that port will now be accepted.

20. The pilgrimage promises well. Forty thousand pilgrims have now arrived by sea in the Hejaz.

21. As is usual at this season, although usury is expressly forbidden in the Koran, inhabitants in and visitors to the Hejaz are being regularly fleeced of 5 per cent. of their cash over the exchange. The Government rate for sterling is 224 Nejd-Hejaz piastres; but the great demand for small change at this time is the opportunity of the local money changers—all Moslems—who refuse to part with the silver and nickel they have cornered at more than 212. The authorities have drastic fines imposable for this contravention of their edict, but they are ineffective. The changers merely decline to change at the official rate. Some day a Bank of the Hejaz will become a necessity. It could do business in pilgrims' drafts and money orders, and would be useful to the Government for the transmission of remittances, for posts and telegraph remittances to foreign administrations, for example.

22. Five slaves have been assisted to return to Africa during February.

NORMAN MAYERS.

No. 29.

Acting Agent, Jeddah, to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received April 4.)

(No. 6.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Jeddah, April 4, 1927.

CONSEQUENT upon proclamation at Riyadh, Ibn Saud has to-day in Jeddah been proclaimed King of Hejaz and Nejd and its dependencies. [Group undecypherable] instruction to the contrary, I propose to continue to address His Majesty as King of Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd only, avoiding occasion, as far as possible, but no doubt Ibn Saud would be gratified if I could address him by his new title at an early date.

[E 1606/323/91]

No. 30.

Acting Consul Mayers to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received April 5.)

(No. 26. Secret.)

Sir,

Jeddah, March 18, 1927.

IT has been my intention for some time past to attempt a summary of the information now available regarding the Soviet diplomatic agency in Jeddah. The approaching departure of M. Khakimoff, to which reference was made in my despatch No. 263 M of the 10th instant to the Governor-General of the Sudan, copy of which was forwarded to the Foreign Office in despatch No. 24 of the same date, affords a suitable occasion for making such a report.

2. From the point of view of general British interests, it is evident that some importance must be attached to the presence in the Hejaz of an active Soviet mission. The Director of Intelligence at Khartum, when he was here in January, described to me the interest which the Sudan Government might have to take in the agency's activities, and subsequently commented on them in paragraphs 151 and 152 of his Secret Intelligence Report No. 11 of the 2nd February. I agree with Mr. Davis that there is, in the frequency with which members of the Soviet Agency visit Eritrea, a potentiality for mischief which ought not to be overlooked.

3. It is at least strange that M. Tuimetoff, M. Khakimoff's second in command, should have been allowed to spend so long away from his post. At the same time it should be borne in mind that there is much boredom and lack of work at the agency, and that he went to Asmara with the two ladies of the agency and their children; so that the reasons of health advanced may be genuine, especially as M. Tuimetoff will be left in charge here when M. Khakimoff goes shortly on leave. Khakimoff is capable of making the sacrifice of part of his staff in that way. On the other hand, even if the use of Asmara was primarily to alleviate the catastrophic effects of the

dumping in Jeddah of this uninformed and now disillusioned party, Tuimetoff no doubt used his opportunity to extend his knowledge of Colonial Africa, reporting to his chief in Jeddah thereon.

4. Similarly, the Intelligence Department of the Government of India have been interested in the theory, suggested to them in the letter No. 777 M copy of which was enclosed in my despatch No. 139 of the 28th November last to the Foreign Office, that the mutawwifs (pilgrim agents) who travel between the Hejaz and Bombay in order to collect clients may be a possible channel for subversive propaganda between this country and India. So far, it is important to note, no substantiation of the theory is forthcoming.

5. The advantages of Mecca and the Hejaz generally as a headquarters for anti-European agitation in the Near and Far East need hardly be dwelt upon. Not only do Moslems from all over the world come to the Hejaz for the pilgrimage, but they also settle for religious study at Mecca and Medina during periods varying from six months to several years. Among these pilgrims and students there must be many who, by their contemplative and theorising natures, afford excellent material for the inflammatory half-truths of the propagandist. In Mecca malcontents from Morocco can meet refugees from Syria, and agitators from India can compare grievances with their sympathisers from Java and Sumatra. It ought to be easy for Soviet agents in Mecca to get into touch with people like the Ali brothers and with the type of migratory agitator whose flight is Kabul, Moscow, Berlin and Constantinople. To the latter class belongs Moulvi Obeidullah, the Indian, now attracting modest notice in Mecca for his lectures expounding the Traditions.

6. The atmosphere of the Hejaz is different from that of ordinary countries. The air does not blow freely here. There are no free newspapers, no easy means of communication with the outer world; the Hejaz is an enclosed space in which prejudice and misconception would spring up rapidly. Religion and the jealous conservation of religious exclusiveness accentuate the difference between the Hejaz and the rest of the world. There are old ladies in Florence who conceive occult affinities with Botticelli, and cranks in Jerusalem who multiply theories of mystic numbers. So much the more does the climate of the Hejaz foster men on whose sharpened nerves the suggestion of Islam in danger from the West would produce jarring chords with immeasurable reverberations. Even in Jeddah one gets glimpses of the artificiality of the atmosphere, and nature has done all in her power to accentuate it.

7. There is, then, excellent ground here for suggestive propaganda. The question is, what use the present Soviet Agency have made of it.

8. I have been struck by the fact that no tangible or definite knowledge has reached me of Soviet propaganda of a direct kind exercised on residents, permanent or temporary, in the Hejaz. My Dutch and my French colleague similarly have had no indication which could give them grounds for complaint against M. Khakimoff and his staff. In this country, where something at least is known of everything, this is important. The Hejaz is too small a community to keep a secret. If M. Khakimoff were engaged in a definite attempt to further the political ends of his Government here by betraying the other European Powers, some echoes of his action would have reached us.

9. Looking at the question from the point of view of Soviet strategy, and supposing that the Soviet Foreign Department consider the Hejaz as a promising post from which to encourage a cleavage between East and West, it would have been a bad plan for M. Khakimoff to plunge into active propaganda immediately the Russian mission was established here. The present ruler of the country is friendly rather than antagonistic to the great colonial Powers, and finds that his business is very much with them. On Great Britain, Holland and France depend to some extent the survival and the prosperity of the Hejaz. Ibn Saud could not afford to view with indifference any tampering with Indian, Javanese or Moroccan pilgrims while on Haj. The Russians know this, and realise that their cue, at the beginning, is to avoid arousing suspicion. Their best plan is to impress upon the people and authorities of the Hejaz that they represent their country in the ordinary consular (or diplomatic) way, that they eat, drink, joke and grow weary as do other mortals, and that they are expecting a pilgrimage from the Moslem portions of the Russian Empire to supply them with considerable work in the future. The idea of 10,000 possible Russian pilgrims from Central Asia is music enough in Hejaz ears.

10. It is very likely that the two or three years during which the agency has been in the Hejaz have been mainly a time of study, a period of observation and due consideration, in Eritrea perhaps as well as in Jeddah and Mecca.

11. That period of observation should now be at an end. M. Khakimoff will know by this time what is possible and what is impossible. As a matter of fact, if anything more vigorous is to be done in the future, M. Khakimoff hopes that it will be the work of a successor of his. He is now going on leave to Italy, but his set purpose is to get into personal touch from there with friends in Moscow, and to arrange that the Hejaz, which he abhors, shall see him no more. Belkin, too, declares that he has no intention to return, even if he has to leave the employ of the Moscow Foreign Department as a result. Tuimetoff, a queer unprepossessing fellow, will be left in charge of the diminished staff, which will now consist simply of M. Axelrod. An instance of the latter's ambition to supplement his livelihood by journalism was furnished by His Majesty's High Commissioner for Egypt in his letter No. 10 M., Secret, of the 28th January, 1927, copy of which was sent to the Foreign Office. It is interesting to see how many of the threads of the Arabian situation Axelrod has got hold of, and how skilfully he has managed to tangle them.

12. M. Khakimoff's departure will thus very probably mark the end of the first stage in the existence of the Soviet Agency at Jeddah. From all appearances, that stage has been mainly a passive one. If the agency is to awaken to a more militant new life, signs of the change may be expected towards the end of the present year.

Copies of this despatch have been sent to Cairo and Khartum.

I have, &c.

NORMAN MAYERS.

No. 31.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Mr. Mayers (Jeddah).

(No. 11.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, April 8, 1927.

YOUR telegram No. 6 of 4th April: Proclamation of Ibn Saud as King of the Hejaz and Nejd and its dependencies.

His Majesty's Government are prepared to use the new title as soon as you receive official notification of it from Minister for Foreign Affairs. Please inform Minister for Foreign Affairs accordingly if he has not yet notified you.

[E 1684/22/91]

No. 32.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received April 11.)

(No. 270.)

Sir,

Rome, April 6, 1927.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 338 of the 10th ultimo enclosing a copy of a telegram addressed to the Resident at Aden regarding the warning which His Majesty's Government are causing to be conveyed to the Imam Yahia of the Yemen, I have the honour to transmit herewith a note in translation which I have received from the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs on this subject. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs state that they gained the impression during the recent conversations in Rome between British and Italian delegates on Arabian affairs that His Majesty's Government did not contemplate any sanctions against the Imam Yahia unless he encroached further upon Aden territory, and did not purpose to expel him from the Aden territory on which he had already encroached. They enquire whether there is any change of policy on the part of His Majesty's Government in the matter.

2. Sir Gilbert Clayton's statement on this subject is contained in the notes of a meeting held at the Palazzo Chigi on the 31st January last. My own impression at the time was that, while His Majesty's Government reserved full liberty of action, they did not intend, at any rate for the moment, to expel the Imam from Aden territory. I await your instructions as to what reply I should return to the Italian Government in the matter.

I have, &c.

R. GRAHAM.

Enclosure in No. 32.

(Translation.)

Note verbale.

(Confidential.)

THE Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the confidential *note verbale* No. 113 of the 22nd March last, in which His Britannic Majesty's Embassy were good enough to inform them of the decision taken by their Government to make a communication to the Imam Yahia through the British Resident at Aden, and so soon as a suitable opportunity occurs, on the lines indicated in the note above referred to, relative to the occupation by the Imam of territories belonging to the Aden Protectorate.

The Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, while thanking the Embassy for the information which His Britannic Majesty's Government have been so good as to furnish as evidence of that spirit of friendly collaboration in which—in accordance with the understanding recently reached at Rome—the respective policies of the British and Italian Governments in the Red Sea and Southern Arabia should be carried out, are nevertheless obliged to observe that, in the course of the conversations referred to, the British delegates agreed that any threat or pressure to obtain from the Imam Yahia the restoration of the territories of the Aden Protectorate, occupied since the period of the war, would have led to no other result except to bring on a definite rupture in the relations between Great Britain and the Yemen. Such a rupture and its inevitable consequences were regarded by the British delegates as absolutely injurious to British policy, especially in view of the serious repercussions which would be caused in the Moslem world.

The British delegates contemplated, on the contrary, that it should be necessary for the Imam Yahia not to carry out any aggressive action beyond the boundaries of the territories actually occupied by him, and that he should renounce any aspirations to dominion over the islands of the Red Sea. A normal situation having then been re-established in the relations with the Imam, His Britannic Majesty's Government would have chosen an opportune moment to reopen friendly negotiations as regards the question of the territories belonging to the Protectorate.

On the basis of these premises, His Britannic Majesty's Government asked the Italian Government to use persuasion with the Imam in order to induce him to renounce any hostile attitude, warning them that, in the event only of further violations of the frontier or of an occupation of the islands, it would be necessary to have recourse to the use of force against the Yemen.

Following upon these assurances, and in application of the point decided in paragraph 7 of the record of the Anglo-Italian conversations at Rome, the Governor of Eritrea received instructions to advise the Imam to avoid any action which might constitute a provocation to Great Britain in the matters referred to. And in fact on the 27th March last the Governor received a telegram from his envoy at Sanaa, who reports that the Imam showed himself convinced of the desirability of having regard to the friendly suggestions of the Italian Government, relative to the frontiers of the Aden Protectorate, Camaran and the Farsan Islands.

In these circumstances, the Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs must suppose that the British Government intend to maintain the point of view expressed by their delegates at Rome, which excluded the idea of an immediate claim to the territories occupied by the Imam.

If it were otherwise, the matter would necessarily be a source of preoccupation to the Royal Government, since the counsels of moderation given by them to the Imam Yahia might be interpreted by him either as having no serious meaning—as being impossible of consideration on the part of the British Government—or as intended merely to keep him quiet pending British action.

In any event the Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs trust that His Britannic Majesty's Government will appreciate at their true value the motives which lead them to request the Embassy to be good enough to inform their Government of the desire of the Italian Government to receive explanations of the proposals of the British Government as regards the Yemen, and in particular to know whether these proposals are still those on which the understanding reached at Rome was founded or whether a different policy is to be expected.

Rome, April 4, 1927.

[16696]

E

[E 1744/119/91]

No. 33.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir G. Clayton.

Sir,

Foreign Office, April 14, 1927.

AS you are aware, the negotiations entered into by His Majesty's Government with the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd in November last, in connection with the revision of the treaty of friendship concluded with him on the 26th December, 1915, were temporarily suspended in December last, in order to enable His Majesty's Government to re-examine certain points of difficulty in regard to which a deadlock had been reached.

2. His Majesty's Government have since had under consideration the report rendered by Mr. Jordan and Mr. Antonius on the negotiations and have decided to renew the negotiations for a new treaty with Ibn Saud. A revised draft of such an instrument has therefore been prepared and a copy is enclosed herein for your information and guidance.

3. His Majesty's Government do not wish to bind you to the exact terms of this draft. You will, however, make it clear to Ibn Saud that in drawing up this document His Majesty's Government have considered sympathetically and endeavoured to meet, so far as possible, the objections raised by him to the previous draft. The present document must therefore be regarded as embodying the limit of the concessions which His Majesty's Government are prepared to make, and, except for minor modifications of detail, as explained hereunder, must be accepted or rejected *in toto*.

4. Dealing *seriatim* with the various parts of the draft, His Majesty's Government have now been informed that Ibn Saud has assumed the title of "King of Nejd." In these circumstances his title throughout the treaty will be altered to read "His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Nejd and its dependencies."

5. Articles 1 to 4 require no comment.

6. Articles 5 and 6. The Iraq Government consider that to include Iraq within the expression "territories under the protection of His Britannic Majesty" would be inconsistent with the text and the spirit of the instruments which govern the relations between His Britannic Majesty and Iraq, and they cannot therefore agree that Iraq should be included in that expression. They also consider that His Majesty's Government are pledged by article 5 of the Anglo-Iraq Treaty of 1922 to afford, until the Iraq Government have appointed their own consular officers, consular protection to Iraqis in the territories of Ibn Saud. They, therefore, see no necessity to regulate by treaty an arrangement which is normally and universally recognised. Protection is already given to Iraqis by British consuls in many foreign countries without special treaties, and it is commonly the practice for a State which has no representative in another State to rely upon a third State, which maintains representatives there, for the protection of its nationals in that State. You will therefore explain the position, as set forth above, to Ibn Saud and proceed to an exchange of notes, concurrently with the signature of the treaty, recognising that, while Iraq is outside the scope of the treaty, His Majesty's consular officers in the Hejaz and Nejd may afford protection to Iraqis in those territories so long as Iraq does not herself maintain representatives there, and His Majesty's consular officers in Iraq may afford protection to Hejazi and Nejd subjects in Iraq, should Ibn Saud so desire.

7. Article 6 embodies an important concession on the part of His Majesty's Government, in that, although specific reference is not made to Capitulations in that article, its terms will, in practice, involve the relinquishment by His Majesty's Government of all claim to capitulatory rights within Ibn Saud's territories.

8. Article 7. The Government of India attach importance to the retention of this article in its present form. If, however, this proves impossible, you will, in the first instance, endeavour to obtain Ibn Saud's acceptance of the following alternative draft:—

"His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Nejd and its dependencies undertakes, as his fathers did before him, to refrain from all aggression on or interference with the territories of Koweit, Bahrein, and of the Sheikhs of Qatar and the Oman Coast, who are in special treaty relations with His Britannic Majesty's Government."

If neither the original article nor the above alternative prove acceptable to Ibn Saud, you may in the last resort propose the following alternative draft:—

"His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Nejd and its dependencies undertakes to maintain, as his fathers did before him, friendly and peaceful relations with the territories of Koweit and Bahrein, and with the Sheikhs of Qatar and the Oman Coast, who are in special treaty relations with His Britannic Majesty's Government."

You should, however, make it plain that the interpretation placed by His Majesty's Government upon all three variants is the same, and that in suggesting the second and third His Majesty's Government do not mean to imply a less degree of interest on their own part or to allow a greater freedom to encroach on the part of Ibn Saud.

9. Article 8, as originally drafted, provided for the recognition by Ibn Saud of the right of manumission of His Majesty's consular officers at Jeddah and elsewhere. Ibn Saud, however, made it clear, in the course of his negotiations with Mr. Jordan, that he would not agree to the inclusion of such provision in the treaty. His Majesty's Government cannot agree to the abandonment of the right of manumission. They are, however, willing, if this solution would meet Ibn Saud's difficulties, to agree to an exchange of notes, to be published simultaneously with the new treaty itself, which would make it clear that His Majesty's Government will continue the right of manumission as in the past and that Ibn Saud acquiesces in this action. You will exercise your discretion as to the precise form of these notes.

10. Articles 9, 10 and 11 are self-explanatory and require no comment.

11. There is one other question to which His Majesty's Government attach importance, namely, that of the settlement of the frontier between Transjordan and the Hejaz. They would, therefore, welcome the signature by Ibn Saud of the draft protocol, a copy of which is enclosed herein, and which was submitted to him in the course of the previous negotiations. His Majesty's Government recognise, however, that, in view of the attitude which Ibn Saud has hitherto adopted in regard to this question, it is unlikely that he will reconsider his previous refusal to sign this protocol. If he declines, you will inform him that His Majesty's Government adhere to their position in regard to this question but that they are prepared not to press for an immediate settlement in view of the promise made by Ibn Saud to Mr. Jordan that, pending a final agreement, the *status quo*, under which Maan and Akaba are administered by Transjordan, will be maintained.

12. Should it appear to you in the course of the negotiations that a breakdown is inevitable, His Majesty's Government consider it desirable that the breakdown should occur over the question of the manumission of slaves (article 8) rather than over that of the Transjordan-Hejaz frontier.

13. In addition to the various matters in regard to which the attitude of His Majesty's Government has been explained above, there are three further questions which Ibn Saud may be expected to raise, namely, (1) the supply of arms, (2) the Hejaz Railway and (3) Haramain Wakfs.

14. As regards the supply of arms, His Majesty's Government are of opinion that this is a question which cannot properly be dealt with in the body of the main treaty. You should, however, inform Ibn Saud that the embargo on the export of war material to Arabia has been removed; that, while the Arms Traffic Convention has not been ratified, the policy of His Majesty's Government would be in accordance with that convention; and that if Ibn Saud should place contracts for the supply of munitions (for governmental purposes) with manufacturers in this country, export licences would not be withheld.

15. As regards the Hejaz Railway, you will inform Ibn Saud that for various practical reasons it is impossible to give effect to the proposal made by him in the course of his negotiations with Mr. Jordan, that the railway should be put in order for the forthcoming pilgrimage; but that His Majesty's Government are discussing the matter with the French Government with a view to the necessary steps being taken to secure the reopening of the railway in time for the pilgrimage of 1928.

16. The question whether it is possible to give Ibn Saud the undertaking requested by him in regard to Haramain Wakfs is still engaging the attention of His Majesty's Government. Final instructions concerning the attitude which you should adopt in regard to this question will be sent to you as soon as possible.

I am, &c.

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

Enclosure 1 in No. 33.

*Revised Draft Treaty.**Preamble.*

HIS Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, and His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their dependencies, being desirous of confirming and strengthening the friendly relations which exist between them and of consolidating their respective interests, have resolved to conclude a treaty of friendship and good understanding, for which purpose His Britannic Majesty has appointed as his plenipotentiary his trusty and well-beloved Stanley Rupert Jordan, Esq., acting British agent and consul at Jeddah, and His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their dependencies has appointed His Royal Highness the Amir Feisal-ibn-Abdul Aziz, His Majesty's son and Viceroy in the Hejaz, as his plenipotentiary.

His Highness the Amir Feisal-ibn-Abdul Aziz and Mr. Stanley Rupert Jordan have accordingly agreed upon and concluded the following articles:—

ARTICLE 1.

There shall be peace and friendship between His Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their dependencies. Each of the high contracting parties agrees and promises to maintain good relations with the other and to endeavour by all the means at his disposal to prevent his territories being used as a base for unlawful activities directed against the interests of the other.

ARTICLE 2.

His Britannic Majesty recognises the complete and absolute independence of the dominions of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their dependencies.

ARTICLE 3.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their dependencies undertakes that the performance of the pilgrimage will be facilitated to British subjects and British protected persons of Moslem faith to the same extent as to other pilgrims, and that they will be safe as regards their property and their person during their stay in the Hejaz.

ARTICLE 4.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their dependencies undertakes that the property of the aforesaid pilgrims who may die in the territories of His Majesty and who are not accompanied by a lawful trustee shall be handed over to the British representative in the said territories, or to such authority as he may appoint for the purpose, to be forwarded by him to the rightful heirs of the deceased pilgrim, provided that the property shall not be handed over until the formalities of the competent tribunals have been complied with and the dues and taxes prescribed under Nejd or Hejazi laws have been duly paid.

ARTICLE 5.

His Britannic Majesty recognises the national (Hejazi or Nejd) status of all subjects of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their dependencies who may at any time be within the territories of His Britannic Majesty or within the territories under the protection of His Britannic Majesty.

On his part, His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their dependencies recognises the national (British or British protected) status of all subjects of His Britannic Majesty and of all persons enjoying the protection of His Britannic Majesty who may at any time be within the territories of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their dependencies.

ARTICLE 6.

All questions arising within Hejazi or Nejd territory between subjects of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their dependencies and subjects of His Britannic Majesty or persons enjoying the protection of His Britannic Majesty shall be settled in Hejazi or Nejd courts in accordance with the dictates of justice and equality before the law.

Similarly, all such questions arising within the territories of His Britannic Majesty or territories under the protection of His Britannic Majesty shall be settled in the competent courts of those territories in accordance with the dictates of justice and of equality before the law.

ARTICLE 7.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their dependencies undertakes, as his fathers did before him, to refrain from all aggression on or interference with the territories of Kuwait, Bahrain, and of the Sheikhs of Qatar and the Oman Coast, who are under the protection of the Government of His Britannic Majesty, and who have treaty relations with the said Government.

ARTICLE 8.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their dependencies undertakes to co-operate with His Britannic Majesty in the suppression of the slave trade.

ARTICLE 9.

The present treaty shall be ratified by each of the high contracting parties and the ratifications exchanged as soon as possible. It shall come into force on the day of the exchange of ratifications and shall be binding during seven years from that date. In case neither of the high contracting parties shall have given notice to the other six months before the expiration of the said period of seven years of his intention to terminate the treaty, it shall remain in force and shall not be held to have terminated until the expiration of six months from the date on which either of the parties shall have given notice of termination to the other party.

ARTICLE 10.

The treaty concluded between His Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and their dependencies (then Sultan of Nejd) on the 26th December, 1915, shall cease to have effect as from the date on which the present treaty comes into force.

ARTICLE 11.

The present treaty has been drawn up in English and Arabic, and both texts shall have the same validity, but in case of divergence the English text shall prevail.

Enclosure 2 in No. 33.

Draft Protocol.

WHEREAS, with a view to fixing the frontier between Nejd and Transjordan and settling certain questions connected therewith, an agreement known as the Hadda Agreement was concluded between His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of Nejd, and was signed at Bahri Camp on the 2nd November, 1925 (corresponding to the 15th Rabi' Thani, 1344); and

Whereas it is considered advisable by His Britannic Majesty's Government and by the Governments of Transjordan and the Hejaz to come to an agreement regarding the frontier between the Hejaz and Transjordan:

We, the undersigned, His Majesty Abdul Aziz-bin-Abdur Rahman-al-Feisal Al Saud, King of the Hejaz and Nejd and its dependencies, and S. R. Jordan, acting

British agent and consul in Jeddah, the duly accredited plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty, have agreed upon the following articles:—

The frontier between the Hejaz and Transjordan starts from the intersection of meridian 38° and parallel 29° 35', which marks the termination of the frontier between Nejd and Transjordan, and proceeds in a straight line to a point on the Hejaz Railway 2 miles south of Mudawwara. From this point it proceeds in a straight line to a point on the Gulf of Akaba 2 miles south of the town of that name.

Signed, &c.

[E 1792/1792/91]

No. 34.

Acting Consul Mayers to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received April 20.)

(No. 29. Secret.)

Sir,

Jeddah, March 25, 1927.

THE officer left in charge of the French consulate in Jeddah has on one or two occasions mentioned to me his suspicion that the Syrians at Ibn Saud's Court, reference to whose influence has been made in various recent Jeddah monthly reports, are in sympathy with the Syrian insurrectionaries. Major Ibrahim Depui's reports in this sense may be in part the cause of French apprehension referred to in your despatch No. 20 of the 24th February last.

2. For example, Major Depui told me some time ago that he had news of a ship from Aden landing ammunition at Yambo late in December last. He said that the ammunition had gone up at once to Medina and had been sent on northwards by desert tracks into Syria. Ibn Saud would have left Medina for Nejd by that time, so that the road would be clear for this secret assistance sent to the Syrian rebels by their well-wishers in the Hejaz. I could obtain no confirmation locally of this story, and the Political Resident at Aden, whom I have asked privately for information, has not yet substantiated it.

3. I am on the whole inclined to doubt the truth of the report. Ibn Saud's prudence would forbid him to give such material aid to the Syrian leaders at a time when he is professing friendship with the "pilgrim" Powers—Great Britain, Holland and France—and his subordinates stand in such awe of the King that they would hardly dare to supply munitions via the Hejaz without his consent. They may, of course, have taken the risk, but it is not likely. It seems much more probable that Ibn Saud is for the present content to watch the situation at Damascus. The Syrians in his entourage cannot help but turn his thoughts sometimes in that direction. Moreover, Damascus, the traditionally coveted jewel of Arabs inhabiting the less favoured regions of the Arab peninsula, will naturally interest Ibn Saud, as will also the report that a new prince is to be set up by the French there. Ibn Saud has more sons than King Hussein had.

4. The King may have sent contributions to Syrian relief funds and allowed his friendly sentiments to be conveyed to some one or two of the Syrian leaders. Whatever his nebulous ambitions for the future may be, I do not think it is likely that Ibn Saud has entered on any commitment with the Syrians which would embarrass him if it became known.

5. In January last I issued visas for Palestine to two members of notable Damascene families who had visited Mecca from Egypt—Sabry Zahet-el-Asaly and Shukry Mahmoud-el-Kowatly. Khalid Bey-el-Hakim, one of the Syrians advising Ibn Saud, had gone a week before them in the same direction. I ventured at the time to acquaint His Majesty's High Commissioner for Palestine and His Majesty's consul at Damascus of the journey of these three persons, on the chance that something of political interest might come to light regarding them. Khalid Bey-el-Hakim, who was formerly in the Corps of Engineers in the Turkish army, may conceivably have gone north to make a report to his master on the railway systems in Syria and Palestine which were formerly part of the Hejaz Railway.

6. There is a chance that these men may be links between Ibn Saud and Syria, as may also be Nuri Shaalan, chief of the Ruala, to whom reference was made in Mr. Smart's despatch No. 112 from Damascus to the Foreign Office of the 26th March, 1926.

I have, &c.

NORMAN MAYERS.

[E 1793/323/91]

No. 35.

Acting Consul Mayers to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received April 20.)

(No. 30. Secret.)

Sir,

Jeddah, March 29, 1927.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 26, Secret, of the 18th instant regarding Soviet activities in the Hejaz, I now learn from M. Khakimoff that his Government have instructed him to stay on in Jeddah until after the pilgrimage. The party who were to accompany him to Italy will proceed independently, and are going to Massawa on the 2nd April next en route for Europe.

2. Khakimoff has been in the Hejaz for three years, but he is courageously settling down to remain in Jeddah until July, when he hopes to get away for good. He talks of from 5,000 to 10,000 pilgrims due from Odessa this year, and of the possibility of one of the pilgrim ships carrying a trade exhibition of Russian exports. It is probably this participation in the pilgrimage of Central Asian Moslems travelling via Russia which accounts for the Soviet Government's new orders to their representative in the Hejaz.

3. I am sending copies of this despatch to Cairo and to Khartum.

I have, &c.

NORMAN MAYERS.

[E 1877/644/91]

No. 36.

Acting Consul Mayers to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received April 25.)

(No. 33. Secret.)

Sir,

Jeddah, April 3, 1927.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith my report on the situation in the Hejaz during the period the 1st to 31st March, 1927.

2. Copies of this report are being sent to Egypt, Jerusalem (two), Bagdad, Aden, Delhi, Beirut (for Damascus), Khartum (through Port Sudan) and Singapore.

I have, &c.

NORMAN MAYERS.

Enclosure in No. 36.

Jeddah Report for the Period March 1 to 31, 1927.

(Secret.)

RAMADAN and March have come to an end much about the same time with a crop of rumours of approaching alarms in Asir. Reports received in Aden of warlike preparations in the Yemen have lately begun to find echoes in the Hejaz.

2. It is recounted that agents of the Imam are working as far north as Kunfida for the purpose of finding friends among the tribesmen of the Tihama. They are said to claim that their master will have Italian support. Imamic agents are also reported in Asir, where the ruling Idrisi, Sayed Hassan, and his kinsman, Sayed Mustafa, are said to have settled their differences and to be opposing simultaneously the dislike and discontent of some of their own countrymen and the threat from the south. Even the Emir of the Zahran and Ghamid tribes, who live in the mountainous country between Turaba and the sea, has received in Mecca, where he is at present living, messengers from his men to ask which direction they should follow. He has advised them to remain quiet and to persist in their loyalty to Ibn Saud. On the other hand, it is reported that spokesmen from the Ghamid and Beni Shahr tribes have gone up to Sanaa.

3. Meanwhile Ibn Saud is supposed to have reassured the Idrisi of his support and to have sent provisions and ammunition to Sabia with a promise of arms and men after Ramadan. Later reports state from one side that the Idrisi forces have taken Samta (north-east of Medi), and from the other that the Imam's troops have taken Nejran (on the desert fringe of the coastal belt), whither Ibn Saud had sent six "flags" of tribesmen.

[16696]

E 4

4. It ought to be stated here that the above reports are unsifted rumour. The events of the next month will show what truth there is in them. In view of all the circumstances, conflict between Ibn Saud and the Imam appears probable. The question is how much importance will be given to it, and whether the conflict will be allowed to assume serious proportions at once. Is there cause for a serious struggle? The Imam may consider that the time has come to use force, but it is not yet clear that either he or Ibn Saud wants a final reckoning at this juncture. The King is not due back in the Hejaz until mid-April at the earliest. He may be spending his last few days in Nejd, where he is more likely to raise troops than in the Hejaz, in making preparations for holding his own in Asir. But one cannot help but surmise that, while taking the necessary precautions, he will let Asir remain a side-issue until the pilgrimage is over. The latter, of course, need not in any way be affected by any unrest, even hostilities, round distant Jizan.

5. Report has it that Mahmoud Nadim Bey, the well-known Turkish ex-Governor of the Yemen, who is at present adviser to the Turkish mission at Jeddah, devotes some of his time to Yemen affairs. He has been described as an unofficial Imamic agent in the Hejaz. He certainly is very much attached to the Yemen, whither newspaper forecasts say he may proceed as Turkish diplomatic representative. Mahmoud Nadim is getting old, but he still may be playing a less active rôle in Yemeni affairs. It is perhaps not impossible that the Turkish Government should offer him to Ibn Saud and to the Imam as mediator, though I have no grounds for supposing they have done so.

6. Another possible intermediary is Sayed Murghani-el-Idrisi, who has again, on the 30th March, arrived at Jeddah, and gone on to Mecca, possibly to Riyadh. This is his third visit during the last few months, the most recent one being just before the publication of the "Mecca Agreement." From certain accounts he has a different policy from that of Sayed Hassan and Sayed Mustafa, and is not without followers in Asir, where some discontent is said to exist at Sayed Mustafa's deal over the Farasan Islands. (The above confirms a similar report which has reached the Political Resident at Aden.)

7. Commendatore Farès, the Italian consul in Jeddah, left on the 24th March for Asmara, whither the Governor of Eritrea, recently returned from Rome, had called him for a rapid consultation. His visit is evidently connected with the newer interest the Italians are taking in Arabia. Commendatore Farès said recently in conversation that, if Ibn Saud would settle the question of his southern frontier, he had no doubt but that Italian recognition of his kingdom would follow. Such a statement, if correctly reported, means a great deal. Commendatore Farès, in the friendliest manner, informed me of his journey before leaving.

8. The arrival of the French armed yacht "Diana" in Jeddah harbour on the 9th March was made the occasion for the decoration of the Emir Feisal, who came down from Mecca purposely, with the badge of Commander of the Legion of Honour. During the Emir's visit to Europe last autumn, the hospitality offered to him in France was somewhat negligent, comparing unfavourably with the decorations and welcome received by him in Great Britain and Holland. The stay in Paris was cut short as a result. The present decoration was by way of compensation. At the banquet given on the occasion, the Acting Director of Foreign Affairs made a speech on behalf of the Emir, emphasising the desire of the Hejaz-Nejd Government to knit friendly relations with the French Government and the identification of the Emir's tour in Europe with that high purpose. It must have been interesting to hear Sheikh Youssef Yassin express these sentiments. When he left Syria a few years ago he was not old enough to have taken a leading part in events there, and he is not of a chronically anti-French turn of mind. But the friendly phrases he used are more likely to express his master's opinions than his own predilections. As for Ibn Saud, it would be interesting to know in what mood his thoughts turn to Damascus now that there is talk of again setting up an Arab prince there.

9. The acting French consul expressed in reply equally fervent hopes of mutual good relations. He felt, he said, that the occasion was an excellent one for conveying to His Majesty the King the goodwill of the French people and the gratitude of France's 45 million Sunni Moslem subjects, of whom 20 million belonged to the Maliki sect, for His Majesty's labours to secure peace, comfort and freedom to the Holy Land of Islam. This downright pronouncement was, I believe, Major Depui's own invention. He says that the reference to the 20 million Malikis covers an allusion to last year's Islamic Conference at Mecca, to which at first Abd-el-Krim

was invited to send a representative, while no invitation was forwarded to the Sultan of Morocco, whose subjects, it would seem, are chiefly Maliki.

10. Ibn Saud, who will hold his Court in Riyadh until the Ramadan 'Aid is over at least, has changed his title and been acclaimed "King of the Hejaz and Nejd and its Dependencies," in place of the former "King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies." The news has for some reason not reached Mecca until the end of March, and the Kingdom of Nejd has not yet been proclaimed here.

11. The Emir Saud has just sent a present of four desert-bred stallions to the eldest son of the King of Egypt. The present, which is probably a reminiscence of Saud's visit to Egypt last year, comes opportunely, as the question of the Egyptian Mahmal will have to be settled in the near future. The Egyptian consul in Jeddah hopes that there will be no objection this year to the presence of the usual armed guard with the Holy Carpet, in spite of last year's dangerous incident, when there was an encounter between the guard and fanatic Wahabis, which might have had grave results. He explains that the guard is there to do honour to the Mahmal rather than to protect it, and that there is no affront to Hejaz sovereignty in this long-established custom. One gathers that the Hejaz authorities would prefer the Carpet to come without armed escort. The matter, which presents many difficulties, will be settled when Ibn Saud returns to Mecca. The situation may be affected by the drafting to Asir of some of the more boisterous of the Nejd warriors.

12. Up to the end of March it was not clear whether Ibn Saud had succeeded in settling matters among the tribal sheikhs of Nejd. A total sum of £80,000 has been sent in the course of the last two months to Riyadh; it is supposed to be used mostly in subsidies. Nevertheless, although some of the tribal leaders had declared themselves satisfied, others, including two of the most important, Feisal-el-Derwish and Sultan-bin-Bijad, were said still to be "out." They declined to go to Riyadh, and refused to accept the presents offered them. These negotiations were thought to be the cause of Ibn Saud's delay in returning to the Hejaz. The foregoing may be out of date, as the trouble in Nejd is now reported as settled, partly through the efforts of Abdullah Jalawi of Hasa.

13. Two Syrian pilgrims were assaulted by Bedouin a short time ago on the road between Yambo and El Wejh. The aggressors, two Billi and two Junainah tribesmen, have been captured and brought to Jeddah for trial. The incident is important as being the first of the sort for a very long time, perhaps since Ibn Saud took over the Hejaz Government. The prompt arrest of the culprits is equally important.

14. Meanwhile there are signs of dissatisfaction with the Government in Mecca while Ibn Saud is away, a dissatisfaction which keeps pace with a tale of small jealousies coming to light as soon as the King is removed, even for a short interval. Some of the details are mere scandal, but it is perhaps as well to report them in an unexaggerated form. In the course of Sheikh Youssef Yassin's brief rule in Mecca during the King's absence, he is making the most of the venality of his predecessor, Dr. Abdullah Damluji, and of the King's friend and adviser, Sheikh Hafiz Wahba, in an attempt to make their return to the Hejaz impossible. Damluji is accused of taking bribes; Hafiz Wahba, it appears, with an eye on European and Indian philatelists, has been making lucrative appropriations of postage stamps. From what can be heard, there is not much doubt about either case. The King is said to know all about the postage stamps, and not to have any illusions about the strict honesty of Damluji—rather, to tolerate for the present these failings of servants who have rendered him good service. Sheikh Youssef Yassin is an ambitious man, and he will no doubt do all he can to supplant Damluji, who went to Hasa in January, and Hafiz Wahba, who was sent to Koweit in December. Whether he will succeed is another question and one which is not so vital while Ibn Saud survives to make one forget the peccadilloes of his subordinates.

15. Indignant articles have appeared in the "Umm-el-Kura" refuting the suggestion made in the "Daily Herald," as telegraphed to "Al Ahram," of Cairo, and given prominence in some Indian papers, that Ibn Saud was offered a subsidy at the recent meeting between His Majesty and British representatives near Medina. The Mecca newspaper declared that none but ill-wishers of the Hejaz could make such a suggestion. The Hejaz and Nejd were free and were under no form of tutelage or protection. King Hussein, the paper went on, received the Hejaz from the Turks; Ibn Saud's kingdom was the gift of his sword alone.

16. A somewhat amusing echo of the visit to Arabia of von Weisl (see the Jeddah report for December 1926) is also quoted in the "Umm-el-Kura" from one

of the German newspapers. Von Weisl is described as saying that Ibn Saud resembled some English statesmen in that he does not waste his time in nurturing and drawing up plans, but merely watches his opportunity and turns it profitably to his interest. In this trait, he says, Ibn Saud differs from his old adversary, King Hussein, and the difference explains his success.

17. The pilgrimage continues to grow, having now reached a total of 55,000. The first Indian pilgrims have begun to arrive. Contingents are promised this year from Morocco and from Russia. The Soviet agent and consul-general, who was about to proceed on leave, has been instructed by his Government to remain in Jeddah until after the Haj, which this year falls on the 9th June. He states that pilgrim ships will be arriving in Jeddah in late April and May from Odessa, bringing from 5,000 to 10,000 pilgrims. There is a suggestion that one of these ships will carry, in addition, a trade exhibition. The news suggests a resumption, as far as Jeddah is concerned, of the operations undertaken before the war by the Russian Volunteer Fleet.

18. The following regulations have been promulgated for pilgrim lodgings:—

All houses occupied by pilgrims are subject to sanitary inspection. A permit from the Health Department is necessary before a house can be let for lodging.

Lodgings are to be kept in a clean condition and whitewashed with lime. Refuse must not be thrown from windows, but placed in covered tins which are to be emptied daily. Rooms must be lighted with smokeless lamps fitted with glass chimneys. Cooking is forbidden in sleeping quarters, and, with the exception of necessities, luggage must be stored elsewhere than in occupied quarters.

Sick pilgrims should be sent to hospital, or reported on, within twenty-four hours of falling ill.

Water-closets must be disinfected with disinfectants, such as carbolic acid. The floor must be cemented and fitted with flushing and plugging arrangements. (Five years are allowed in which to install these water-closets.)

Every mutawwif (pilgrims' agent) is to have a copy of these regulations and will be fined for contravention of them. He is also to be in possession of a special register, in which he must keep the name, age, nationality, profession and passport number of each pilgrim under his charge, as well as the date of his arrival in Jeddah, Mecca, Arafat and his departure homewards.

19. Two slaves, during March, have been assisted to return to Africa.

NORMAN MAYERS.

March 31, 1927.

[E 1884/1328/91]

No. 37.

Acting Consul Mayers to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received April 25.)

(No. 35.)

Sir,

Jeddah, April 7, 1927.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 6 of the 4th instant and Foreign Office despatch No. 27 of the 24th March last, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith translation of a letter dated the 4th April which I have received from the Acting Director of Foreign Affairs informing me officially of His Majesty King Abd-el-Aziz's new title of "King of the Hejaz, Nejd and its Dependencies," and requesting me to bring the information to the notice of His Majesty's Government.

2. The 25th Rajab, 1345, date on which Ibn Saud theoretically adopted his new title, corresponds in our era to the 20th January, 1927. It seems rather strange that definite information of the change was not available in Mecca until the end of March. Perhaps Ibn Saud thought there was no need for haste in making it known. In Riyadh he is farther removed from the usages of the outer world than he is in Mecca.

I have, &c.

NORMAN MAYERS.

Enclosure in No. 37.

Youssef Yassin to the Acting British Agent and Consul, Jeddah.

(After greetings.)

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that when His Majesty my Lord the King honoured Riyadh, the capital of the Sultanate of Nejd and its Dependencies, deputations representing the people of that Sultanate and its Dependencies arrived there and met in conference on the 25th Rajab, 1345, under the presidency of His Majesty [sic] the Imam Abd-el-Rahman-el-Faisal Al Saud, father of His Majesty the King, and decided to constitute the Sultanate of Nejd and its Dependencies a kingdom to be called the "Kingdom of Nejd and its Dependencies." They also decided to proclaim His Majesty the King of the Hejaz, Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies, King Abd-el-Aziz-bin-Abd-el-Rahman-el-Faisal Al Saud, King over it in the name of "King of Nejd and its Dependencies."

The decision was then submitted to His Majesty, who issued the following order:—

"In view of what has been submitted to us by the competent authorities among our subjects in the Sultanate of Nejd and its Dependencies, we have ordered that the Sultanate of Nejd and its Dependencies be the Kingdom of Nejd and its Dependencies, and that our title be henceforth King of the Hejaz, Nejd and its Dependencies.

"I pray God to grant us succour and aid to bear the burden of this task: For He is the best helper.

"Dated 25th Rajab, 1345.

"ABD-EL-AZIZ,

"King of the Hejaz, Nejd and its Dependencies."

Please communicate this to your Government.

(With respects.)

YOUSSEF YASSIN,

Acting Director of Foreign Affairs.

Dated 2.10.1345 (April 4, 1927).

[E 1903/76/91]

No. 38.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 1222.)

My Lord Marquess,

Foreign Office, April 30, 1927.

YOUR Lordship will have received, under cover of my despatch No. 957 of the 5th April, a copy of Sir C. Hurst's despatch of the 18th March enclosing the draft of a convention relative to the maintenance of the Red Sea lighthouses, which was prepared by him at Geneva in concert with M. Fromageot.

2. His Majesty's Government have now considered the terms of this draft convention, and are content with the general lines on which it has been drawn up. I shall therefore be glad if you will convey to the French Government an intimation to this effect, and enquire whether they feel similarly disposed towards the draft convention, in which case the negotiations envisaged in article 1 will forthwith be started between the President of the Board of Trade and the Ottoman Lighthouse Company.

3. In making this communication you should explain that, while His Majesty's Government are prepared to accept the general principle underlying the draft convention, they reserve the right to propose any modifications of detail which may seem to them desirable in the light of further examination of its terms. The French Government may also wish to introduce some modifications. His Majesty's Government therefore suggest that, if the reply of the French Government to your communication is favourable, a meeting should be arranged as soon as possible between Sir Cecil Hurst and M. Fromageot, who would agree on a final draft of the proposed convention, embodying any modifications of detail considered necessary by the two Governments.

I am, &c.

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

No. 39.

Lord Lloyd to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received May 14.)

(No. 181.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Cairo, May 14, 1927.

EGYPTIAN Government has issued following communiqué:—

"Ibn Saud has stipulated that escort of Mahmal must be unarmed and that ceremonial procession of Mahmal, &c., shall be prohibited. He has also imposed other conditions contrary to traditions and restricting the liberty of pilgrims.

"In the circumstances, Egyptian Government has decided not to send Mahmal this year and to warn the Egyptian pilgrims that their journey will not be without danger and that they go at their own risk."

The other conditions mentioned above are, I understand, that there shall be no smoking in public and no kissing of the tombs, &c.

(Sent to India and Jeddah.)

[E 2274/644/91]

No. 40.

Acting Consul Mayers to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 47.)

Sir,

Jeddah, April 25, 1927.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith my report on the situation in the Hejaz during the period the 1st to 25th April, 1927.

2. Copies of this report are being sent to Egypt, Jerusalem (2), Bagdad, Aden, Delhi, Beirut (for Damascus), Khartum (through Port Sudan), Singapore and Lagos (2).

I have, &c.

NORMAN MAYERS.

Enclosure in No. 40.

Jeddah Report for the Period April 1 to April 25, 1927.

ON the second day of the Ramadan Bairam (the 4th April), Ibn Saud was proclaimed in Jeddah King of the Hejaz, Nejd and its Dependencies. It had been known for some time that His Majesty was desirous of changing his title from Sultan to King of Nejd, but it is somewhat strange that the news was not general in the Hejaz until April, the event to which it refers having taken place much earlier.

2. We are given to understand that on the 29th January, 1927 (25 Rajab, 1345), a meeting of chieftains and "deputations representing the people of Nejd" met at Riyadh under the presidency of the Imam Abdul-Rahman, the aged father of Ibn Saud, and decided to constitute a kingdom out of the Sultanate of Nejd. This decision was communicated to King Abdul-Aziz, who thereupon ordered that the Sultanate of Nejd and its Dependencies be henceforth the Kingdom of Nejd and its Dependencies, and that his royal title for the future be King of the Hejaz, Nejd and its Dependencies. Having issued this decree, Ibn Saud prayed for heavenly succour to bear the burden of his task.

3. The new style of the King was proclaimed in Mecca by the Emir Feisal on the 1st April. The Kingdom of Nejd, he said, now took its place among the kingdoms of the earth, and he expressed his hopes that the new kingdom would show itself worthy in history of the Moslem Arab nation, of which it formed a part. He prayed for the aid of the Almighty in Ibn Saud's task of seeking the honour of Islam and raising the prestige of the Arab race.

4. Although the Jeddah garrison presented arms, and the school-children sang, when Ibn Saud was proclaimed King of Nejd in Jeddah, there was no popular enthusiasm. There was, indeed, no cause for enthusiasm. To the fanciful, the change may appear a step towards the unification of the Arabs under one crown, and perhaps a step nearer to the Caliphate. But only in a nominal sense are the Hejaz and Nejd one.

5. Among Ibn Saud's reasons for assuming the new title is his desire to end all suggestion of the inferiority of Nejd as compared with the Hejaz. Indeed, the change has probably an internal, rather than an external, significance. That it means little to the outside world can be judged from the readiness with which Soviet Russia, Holland and France have recognised the new title, the first-named Government adding its congratula-

tions. Before all of these, His Majesty's Government had authorised the use of the new title in correspondence with the King, the first occasion being on the 14th April.

6. The new designation makes Ibn Saud King of Arabia, from the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf; but the contrast in character between the Hejaz and Nejd remains for the present as marked as ever. In religion, where the two countries might be expected to find common ground, there is complete discord. The intolerance of the Wahabis infuriates the Hejazi townsman as much as the fundamental mercantilism of the Jeddah merchant and the Mecca pilgrim-broker breeds contempt in the heart of the more single-minded beduin of the desert. A difference of opinion such as that over the use of tobacco raises passion out of proportion with the importance of the question, because founded on a profound dissimilarity of outlook. So far Ibn Saud has not succeeded in unifying the two realms. He has, in fact, not attempted to, except in the monarchy. It would not be difficult to show that the hardest political and administrative problems he has had to face in the last few years arise out of the duality of his kingdom and will continue to do so. It would be pure sentimentality to suppose that the new title effects any radical change. The unified kingdom looks well on the map, but that means little to Ibn Saud.

7. The King should now be on his way back from Riyadh to the Hejaz, where he will in all probability meet Sir Gilbert Clayton early in May in order to continue the conversations with Great Britain interrupted in December last.

8. Relations with European countries remain much the same as they were. The Italian consul, Commendatore Farès (see paragraph 7 of the March report), returned to the Hejaz after a couple of days with Commendatore Gasperini in Asmara, and announced that instead of retiring from his post in July, as he had hoped, the Governor of Eritrea had persuaded him to remain on in Jeddah until next year. This may mean that the Italians consider Commendatore Farès a suitable representative of Italian interests should they decide to settle on a permanent basis their relations with Ibn Saud. Farès is old, but his knowledge of the Red Sea area is very sound.

9. There is some talk of Turkey in due course approaching Ibn Saud about negotiations to define mutual relations. The negotiations would be conducted by the present Turkish representative, Suleiman Shevket Bey, whose status would be decided during them. The above report is not confirmed, but sounds authentic. If any agreement is arrived at between Ibn Saud and Turkey, it is probable that it will be on general terms of friendship only. Suleiman Shevket Bey remarked the other day that his country had now no special interest in the Hejaz.

10. The claims tribunal set up in Palestine under the Hadda Agreement in December last to settle inter-tribal raids and looting is not making easy progress. The Hejaz-Nejd Government, under the guidance of Sheikh Youssef Yassin, Acting Foreign Minister, wishes the present meeting to deal only with claims since Ramadan, 1343, date from which the tribes on both sides of the frontier were warned that they would be held responsible, he says, for looting. A balance struck at that date would show, I believe, a substantial credit of camels, looted by the Transjordan tribesmen, in favour of their Nejd rivals. At the same time, however, the Transjordan delegates to the tribunal have claimed that judgment should include raids since the occupation of Jaufr in the Wadi Sirhan by Ibn Saud's forces. The Hejaz-Nejd delegates have not been able to refuse to consider these earlier claims, which are mostly in favour of Transjordan; but Sheikh Youssef appears to intend to postpone having them adjudicated as far as possible, and at the same time denounces the Transjordan claims as fabrications and exaggerations. The tribunal must be a very difficult instrument to handle, chiefly because the Hejaz-Nejd authorities look on the court, and the claims put before it, in a very special light. As far as the Transjordan-Nejd Tribunal is concerned, Sheikh Youssef Yassin seems to consider the proceedings more as an international conference, in which political honour and appetite are involved, rather than as a court of assize. As far as can be judged, the King himself wishes the tribunal to succeed. On his return it will be known whether the tribunal will adjourn until August or break off inconclusively.

11. Preparations for the Iraq-Nejd Tribunal, which is to be held at Koweit, are meanwhile going forward.

12. With regard to the Yemen, the Acting Foreign Minister told me the other day that the situation on the southern frontier was quite calm. He said that it was true that the Imam had concentrated troops, but that the concentration was to deal with unrest in Jaufr (near Nejran). In Jeddah rumours of local fighting in Asir have died out. It certainly looks as though, for the time being, trouble will not develop between the Imam and Ibn Saud. There was, however, some time ago, a report that Ibn Saud was bringing with him to Mecca, on his return, 10,000 Nejdian troops, who would stay in the vicinity of the city during the pilgrimage and then be ready for use, if necessary, in the south. This will

remain to be seen. Ibn Saud cannot help but be preoccupied with the Imam until the Asir question is settled.

13. An official statement is issued to the effect that Ibn Saud has no official representative either at Angora or in Rome.

14. The "Umm-el-Kura" states that Sharaf Adnan Pasha, president of the Islamic Conference, has received a telegram from Shu'aib Kurashi, in India, to say that the Indian branch of the Islamic Conference (i.e., the continuation of last year's Islamic Conference in Mecca), has been established in Bombay, and that the delegates for the journey to the Hejaz have been chosen. He enquired whether invitations to this year's session had been sent out. Sharaf Adnan ignored the telegram, but telegraphed instead to Sheikh Suleiman-bin-Nadawi that, as Shu'aib Kurashi and the Ali brothers were carrying on propaganda in India against the pilgrimage, the general opinion in the Hejaz was that discussions with them and their friends on any matters whatsoever were undesirable. The Ali brothers are further accused of spreading false reports about insecurity in the Hejaz arising from differences between Ibn Saud and the Imam.

15. More strong still is the denunciation of the Maharajah of Mahmudabad and his appeal to the Viceroy to obtain British support for a deputation described as intending to come to Mecca to remonstrate with Ibn Saud over his demolition of tombs and to arrange for their rebuilding. Certain Indian papers are quoted to show that even among the Indian Moslems themselves this appeal for intervention by a Christian Power is deplored. A statement from Mohammed 'Irfan, secretary of the Indian Ulema Society, is also quoted at length. It denounces interference and declares a belief that Great Britain will not undertake the great responsibility of meddling in such an affair, which would be a breach of her "promise" not to interfere in Hejaz politics.

16. Seventy thousand pilgrims have now arrived by sea. There is talk of a pilgrimage of 50,000 Nejdīs this year, and fears have been expressed in some quarters that a clash will ensue when this host meets the Mahmal and its escort. It is impossible, of course, to state at this juncture whether or not the fear is justified. Two facts have a bearing, however, on the situation. The first is that the Nejdīs had last year, and did not take it, as much chance as they will have this year of retaliating on the Egyptian escort of the Sacred Carpet. The second is that Ibn Saud must necessarily exert every effort, and all his authority over his countrymen, to see that no untoward accident occurs. He is justly proud of the security he has introduced into the Hejaz, and a brawl at the pilgrimage would enormously injure his prestige throughout the Moslem world. The famous Ibn Jalawi, of Hasa, is said to be coming on pilgrimage this year. If he does come, Ibn Saud may use his influence among the Nejdī chieftains as an instrument for keeping order. But nothing can be done about the Mahmal until the King's return. The Egyptian consul in Jeddah will then discuss with His Majesty conditions for this year's ceremony and report to his Government, who, in their turn, he says, will have to consult the Egyptian ulema. Time for this is getting very short.

17. The pilgrimage from Persia is again officially discountenanced this year. In an article criticising an interview with the Persian Minister in Egypt reported in the "Siyasa," of Cairo, the Wahabi position is again defined. The Wahabīs do not interfere, the editor writes, with the performance of religious duties. They only prevent what is contrary to religion and the Koran, and only enforce duties clearly laid down, such as public prayer and the Ramadan fast. As for the question of visits to tombs, it is pointed out that the orthodox doctrine in this respect was laid down at last year's Islamic Conference, and visits which conform to that are still allowed. Moslems who abide by the Koran and the traditions are cordially received; but those who insist on practices contrary to religion must not expect a welcome in the Hejaz. The writer suggests that this is not merely "Wahabi" doctrine, but ordinary Moslem orthodoxy. In this matter, he concludes, Ibn Saud must put his duty towards God before considerations of worldly policy, whether his relations with Persia and India are adversely affected or not. The King must place the satisfaction of the Almighty before the satisfaction of mankind.

18. Reports of shortage of water in Mecca are officially denied. There are, at the present time, in Medina and Mecca, about fifteen deaths from smallpox each week, many, I understand, among Javanese pilgrims. This is heavier than usual but not, according to my information, sufficient to be alarming.

19. Administration of all but the simplest matters is now at a standstill in the Hejaz until Ibn Saud returns.

20. One slave has been sent back to Africa during the period under review.

NORMAN MAYERS,
Acting Agent and Consul.

Jeddah, April 25, 1927.

No. 41.

Acting Agent, Jeddah, to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received May 22.)

(No. 16.)
(Telegraphic.)

Jeddah, May 21, 1927.

FOLLOWING from Sir G. Clayton:—

"Treaty signed yesterday (20th May) in accordance with draft attached to instructions, with a few necessary alterations. Ibn Saud would not sign protocol, but a satisfactory exchange of letters was effected. Letters were also exchanged regarding manumission.

"I have agreed to Ibn Saud's request for an immediate announcement to the effect that the negotiations have happily led to conclusion of a treaty of amity and that particulars of treaty will be published later. He is issuing a communiqué in that sense, and I particularly request that no more detailed information be issued by His Majesty's Government until my arrival in London.

"I leave to-day for Cairo via Suez, and propose to leave Port Said for London 29th May by P. and O. steamer via Marseilles.

"My address in Egypt will be the Residency, Cairo."

No. 42.

Acting Agent, Jeddah, to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 18.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Jeddah, May 29, 1927.

MY telegram No. 16.

Communiqué published yesterday announces conclusion of treaty of peace on basis of recognition of sovereign independence and states that text of treaty will be published when ratifications are exchanged.

Copy sent to Cairo by bag.

[E 2582/119/91]

No. 43.

Sir G. Clayton to Sir Austen Chamberlain.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 6, 1927.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following report on my recent mission to Jeddah for the purpose of negotiating a treaty with the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd.

Journey to Port Sudan.

2. I left London on the 15th April, 1927, for Marseilles, where I embarked on the Bibby Line steamship "Lancashire," arriving at Port Sudan on the 24th April. I was accompanied from London by Mr. S. R. Jordan, and Mr. G. Antonius joined the mission at Port Said on the 21st April.

Delay in proceeding to Jeddah.

3. On arrival at Port Sudan I received a telegram from His Britannic Majesty's consul at Jeddah informing me that Ibn Saud was not expected in Mecca before the 4th May. I therefore decided that Mr. Jordan should proceed to Jeddah in H.M.S. "Dahlia" on the following day, while I remained for a few days in Port Sudan, accompanied by Mr. Antonius. I considered this arrangement desirable as I did not wish the mission to risk losing dignity by waiting about at Jeddah and affording material for local gossip and intrigue.

Journey to Jeddah.

4. On the 1st May I embarked with Mr. Antonius in H.M.S. "Dahlia" (Commander Cotton, R.N.), arriving on the following morning at Jeddah, where I was received with due ceremony by the Hejazi authorities and conducted to His Britannic Majesty's consulate.

Arrival of Ibn Saud in Jeddah and Reception of Mission.

5. The arrival of Ibn Saud in Mecca was still further delayed until the 7th May, and he did not reach Jeddah until the morning of the 9th May, on the afternoon of which day the mission was received in audience by the King. The meeting was restricted to the usual exchange of greetings and compliments, and was marked by great cordiality and friendliness on the part of the King, who insisted that the mission should leave the consulate and occupy a house on the outskirts of Jeddah which he caused to be prepared for its reception.

Initiation of Negotiations.

6. On the following day conversations began, and are given in detail in a subsequent despatch.

Main Points at issue.

7. It was evident from the results of the conversations at Wadi-al-Aqiq, conducted in December last by Mr. Jordan and Mr. Antonius, that the main questions at issue were—

- (a.) Recognition of the special position of His Majesty's Government in mandated territories.
- (b.) Mutual recognition of national status.
- (c.) Retention of the right of manumission of slaves by His Majesty's consular officers.
- (d.) The Hejaz-Transjordan frontier.

The first two questions appeared to present no difficulty, as His Majesty's Government had consented to meet Ibn Saud's point of view in both cases. It was to be anticipated, however, that the requirements of His Majesty's Government in respect of manumission and the Hejaz-Transjordan frontier would meet with strenuous opposition, and this forecast proved to be correct; indeed, at the close of the sixth meeting agreement was not yet in sight.

Private Interview with Ibn Saud—and his Attitude.

8. At this stage, however, Ibn Saud requested a private and personal interview with me, at which matters came to a head. He assured me that he appreciated fully the reasons for the attitude taken up by His Majesty's Government, and begged me to believe that it was his earnest wish to meet their wishes in every possible way; he was, however, in a very delicate position, especially in regard to the Hejaz-Transjordan frontier, and to sign the protocol at the present juncture would be to expose himself to violent criticism not only by his enemies, but also by his friends; moreover, he had many difficulties to contend with in his task of consolidating the position which he had won, and he could not afford to undermine his own prestige or do anything to alienate his friends and strengthen his enemies. In conclusion, somewhat to my surprise, he said that he had now come to me, as a trusted friend, to ask my frank and impartial opinion as to his best course of action, and was prepared to accept and act upon my advice.

Sir G. Clayton's Advice to Ibn Saud.

9. I replied that His Majesty's Government had decided that they must retain the right of manumission and were also determined to maintain the Hejaz-Transjordan frontier as defined in the draft protocol. Unless these two points were adequately safeguarded, no treaty was possible, and I had no hesitation in saying that, in my opinion, a rupture would react very unfavourably on his interests and those of his country. I strongly advised him, therefore, to meet the wishes of His Majesty's Government. Ibn Saud accepted my advice, and appealed to me to find a way in which the requirements of His Majesty's Government could be met with the minimum of injury to his own position and prestige.

Slave Traffic.

10. I did not feel able to suggest any solution of the question of the slave trade other than that of the insertion in the body of the treaty of an article by which Ibn Saud would undertake to co-operate, as far as practicable, in its suppression, supplemented by an exchange of letters making it clear that His Majesty's Government would continue to exercise the right of manumission by their consular officers.

Frontier Question.

11. The question of the frontier, however, required fuller consideration. I could, perhaps, have induced Ibn Saud at that stage to sign the protocol, and I felt it very desirable to reach a definite settlement without delay. On the other hand, his arguments against this course were cogent, and it was obviously undesirable to force him into a really difficult position; moreover, I was convinced that it would be better, in the interests of future co-operation and good relations, to ensure that the treaty should be signed in a spirit of real amity and confidence than to leave behind me a feeling that it had been concluded in an atmosphere of coercion as opposed to one of mutual agreement.

Exchange of Letters re Frontier Question.

12. I therefore decided in favour of a solution on the lines of paragraph 11 of my instructions, and informed Ibn Saud that, while still maintaining that signature of the draft protocol was the most satisfactory course to follow, I was ready to accept an exchange of letters such as would recognise adequately the position which His Majesty's Government had decided to maintain. Ibn Saud held by his promise to accept my advice on both points, and went as far as to say that, if I would draft the necessary letters, he would sign them, an understanding which he duly fulfilled.

Question of Nationality and Tribunals.

13. Agreement now appeared to have been reached on all the more contentious questions and it only remained for Mr. Antonius and Ibn Saud's advisers to settle various minor points in sub-committee and to draw up the final draft. During the discussions in sub-committee, however, an unexpected difficulty arose. Ibn Saud's advisers tried by all possible means to extend the scope of article 6 in such a manner as to involve a complete renunciation of the Capitulations by His Majesty's Government, and finally they informed Mr. Antonius that the King would be unable to sign the treaty unless I agreed to renounce the Capitulations or, at least, to inform him in writing that His Majesty's Government would raise no objection if he were to abolish them by proclamation.

Negotiations at a Deadlock on the Question of Capitulations.

14. I saw Ibn Saud the next morning and, finding that his advisers had described the situation correctly, I informed him categorically that I was unable to accede to his demand. He remained firm and insisted that he could sign no treaty unless the jurisdiction of his courts was fully recognised in all cases, both civil and criminal, and in regard to foreigners as well as natives. I urged that His Majesty's Government had already made a great concession in article 6 and begged him to reflect before he wrecked the treaty by persisting in a demand to which it was beyond my power to accede; but he refused to give way and a rupture appeared almost inevitable.

Solution of the Capitulations Difficulty.

15. Mr. Antonius then had one more private interview with Dr. Abdullah Damluji and Sheikh Hafez Wahba in the hope of finding some solution at the eleventh hour, and it transpired at length that there had been a misunderstanding and some confusion of ideas in the King's mind. Article 6, far from being regarded as a concession, had given rise to grave suspicion in the minds of Ibn Saud's advisers, who interpreted it as an attempt to obtain recognition of the principle of Capitulations under the guise of a concession in regard to a specific portion of them. They had communicated their suspicions to the King, who, having hitherto maintained the attitude of ignoring the existence of Capitulations altogether, immediately became alarmed and took up an extreme attitude.

Conclusion and Signature of Treaty.

16. The situation was now clear and Ibn Saud's advisers, having been reassured as to the intention of His Majesty's Government, suggested that the elimination of the offending article and the addition of a vague, and I consider innocuous, sentence at the end of article 5 would probably secure agreement. I saw the King the next morning and proposed this solution, to which he agreed at once.

The final text was then prepared and the treaty was duly signed and the letters exchanged on the evening of the 20th May, at the conclusion of a dinner which the King gave in honour of the mission. The texts are enclosed herein.

Questions outside the Scope of Treaty.

17. I will now explain the action taken in regard to certain questions which are dealt with in my instructions, but which do not fall within the compass of the treaty.

Position of Iraq.

18. In paragraph 6 of my letter of instructions I was directed to explain to Ibn Saud the position of the Iraq Government and to proceed to an exchange of notes recognising that, while Iraq is outside the scope of the treaty, His Majesty's consular officers in the Hejaz and Nejd may afford protection to Iraqis in those territories so long as Iraq does not herself maintain representatives there.

Postponement of Iraq Question.

19. I had intended to deal with this question after conclusion of the negotiations, and I did not anticipate that it would give rise to any difficulty. Unfortunately, the question of nationality and that of tribunals, dealt with in articles 5 and 6 of the draft treaty, had produced a very acute situation, and I was convinced that if I raised the question of Iraq I should once more provoke grave, even though unfounded, suspicion and probably wreck the treaty irretrievably. I therefore decided that it was necessary to postpone the question for the present. It is a question of fact and not of negotiation, and can properly be communicated through the usual official channels to the Government of the Hejaz and of Nejd at some convenient time, possibly when the exchange of ratifications takes place.

Hejaz Nationality Law.

20. For similar reasons I thought it unwise to discuss the objections put forward by His Majesty's Government to certain articles in the Hejaz Nationality Law, promulgated on the 29th September, 1926. The matter is not one of immediate urgency, and will be better dealt with by His Majesty's consul at Jeddah after the treaty has been ratified.

Removal of Embargo on Import of Arms.

21. I explained to Ibn Saud that His Majesty's Government were of opinion that the supply of arms was a question which could not properly be dealt with in the body of the main treaty. This question has been made the subject of an exchange of letters between Ibn Saud and myself on the lines laid down in my instructions.

Hejaz Railway.

22. Ibn Saud raised the question of the Hejaz Railway, and I informed him that, for practical reasons, it had not been possible to give effect to his request that the railway should be put in order for this year's pilgrimage; but His Majesty's Government were discussing the matter with the French Government with a view to the necessary steps being taken to secure the reopening of the railway in time for the pilgrimage of 1928. The King, after expressing the earnest hope that every effort would be made to secure the operation of the railway before next year's pilgrimage, asked to be given, as soon as possible, a statement of the situation up to date, and to be kept fully informed as to the progress of negotiations. He added that he presumed that he would be given the opportunity of nominating a representative to the conference which must be held with a view to arranging a final settlement, and asked to be furnished, in good time, with all the details and information necessary for a thorough study of the question.

Awqaf-el-Haramain.

23. I discussed with the King the question of the Awqaf-el-Haramain, and explained to him that it was contrary to the invariable principle of His Majesty's Government to interfere in religious matters or in the decisions of religious, or even of civil, courts. His Majesty's Government, therefore, regretted that they did not see their way to exerting any influence to assist him in obtaining the revenues of Wakfs, which he maintained should be devoted to the upkeep and improvement of the sanctuaries of Islam at Mecca and Medina. Ibn Saud replied that he appreciated and respected His Majesty's Government's point of view, but he thought that his request for assistance in this matter had perhaps been misunderstood. He had no wish to ask His Majesty's Government to interfere in religious matters or in the operation of courts,

either religious or civil. He proposed to apply through the proper channels for those Wakf revenues which he considered should be paid over to him, and, if necessary, to bring actions before the competent tribunals.

All he asked of His Majesty's Government was that they should help him, as far as possible, to obtain justice in cases where unfair influence might be exerted against him and his claims unjustly blocked by refusal to furnish necessary information or by other methods. He asked that His Majesty's Government should reconsider his request in the light of these explanations, and make a further communication to him as soon as possible. He also requested that he might be assisted by being furnished with—

- (a.) Information as to what Awqaf-el-Haramain existed in India.
- (b.) Advice as to the proper steps to take with a view to preferring and establishing such claims as he might wish to make.
- (c.) The normal measure of guidance and assistance to any delegation which he might decide to send to India, or elsewhere, for the purpose of making enquiries and preferring claims.

Departure from Jeddah and Return to England.

24. On the 21st May the mission paid an official farewell visit to the King and then embarked on the Italian steamship "Nasario Sauro," arriving at Suez on the morning of the 24th May and proceeding to Cairo on the same day. Five days were spent in Egypt in liquidating the business of the mission, and on the 29th May I embarked in the P. and O. steamship "Ranpura," accompanied by Mr. Jordan, arriving in London, via Marseilles, on the 4th June. Mr. Antonius remained in Egypt and returned thence to Jerusalem.

Thanks to Local Authorities.

25. I cannot close this report without placing on record the extreme kindness of our reception by the King and all the officials of his Government with whom we came in contact. Everything possible was done for our comfort and convenience, and the negotiations were carried out in an atmosphere of extreme friendliness and good humour.

Staff.

26. In conclusion, I desire to testify to the services rendered by my colleagues on the mission, Mr. S. R. Jordan and Mr. G. Antonius, whose previous work at Wadi-al-Aqiq was of great assistance in clearing the ground and enabling me to form a just appreciation of the situation. Mr. Jordan afforded me valuable help at all times and placed his local knowledge and experience unreservedly at my disposal. I have had occasion, in connection with previous missions to the Hejaz and the Yemen, to bring the services of Mr. Antonius to the favourable notice of His Majesty's Government, and will only add now that his intimate knowledge of Arab language and psychology, combined with a clear understanding of the questions at issue, was quite invaluable and contributed in no small measure to the results achieved.

I have, &c.

GILBERT CLAYTON.

Enclosure I in No. 43.

Treaty with the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd.

HIS Majesty the King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, on the one part; and

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and its Dependencies, on the other part;

Being desirous of confirming and strengthening the friendly relations which exist between them and of consolidating their respective interests, have resolved to conclude a treaty of friendship and good understanding, for which purpose His Britannic Majesty has appointed as his plenipotentiary Sir Gilbert Falkingham Clayton, and His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and its Dependencies has appointed His Royal Highness the Amir Faisal ibn Abdul-Aziz, his son and Viceroy in the Hejaz, as his plenipotentiary.

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His Highness the Amir Faisal ibn^{*} Abdul-Aziz and Sir Gilbert Falkingham Clayton, having examined their credentials and found them to be in good and due form, have accordingly agreed upon and concluded the following articles:—

ARTICLE 1.

His Britannic Majesty recognises the complete and absolute independence of the dominions of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and its Dependencies.

ARTICLE 2.

There shall be peace and friendship between His Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Nejd and its Dependencies. Each of the high contracting parties undertakes to maintain good relations with the other and to endeavour by all the means at its disposal to prevent his territories being used as a base for unlawful activities directed against peace and tranquillity in the territories of the other party.

ARTICLE 3.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and its Dependencies undertakes that the performance of the pilgrimage will be facilitated to British subjects and British-protected persons of the Moslem faith to the same extent as to other pilgrims, and announces that they will be safe as regards their property and their person during their stay in the Hejaz.

ARTICLE 4.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and its Dependencies undertakes that the property of the aforesaid pilgrims who may die within the territories of His Majesty and who have no lawful trustee in those territories shall be handed over to the British Agent in Jeddah or to such authority as he may appoint for the purpose, to be forwarded by him to the rightful heirs of the deceased pilgrims; provided that the property shall not be handed over to the British representative until the formalities of the competent tribunals have been complied with and the dues prescribed under Hejazi or Nejd laws have been duly collected.

ARTICLE 5.

His Britannic Majesty recognises the national (Hejazi or Nejdi) status of all subjects of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and its Dependencies who may at any time be within the territories of His Britannic Majesty or territories under the protection of His Britannic Majesty.

Similarly, His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and its Dependencies recognises the national (British) status of all subjects of His Britannic Majesty and of all persons enjoying the protection of His Britannic Majesty who may at any time be within the territories of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and its Dependencies; it being understood that the principles of international law in force between independent Governments shall be respected.

ARTICLE 6.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and its Dependencies undertakes to maintain friendly and peaceful relations with the territories of Kuwait and Bahrain, and with the Sheikhs of Qatar and the Oman Coast, who are in special treaty relations with His Britannic Majesty's Government.

ARTICLE 7.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and its Dependencies undertakes to co-operate by all the means at his disposal with His Britannic Majesty in the suppression of the slave trade.

ARTICLE 8.

The present treaty shall be ratified by each of the high contracting parties and the ratifications exchanged as soon as possible. It shall come into force on the day of

the exchange of ratifications and shall be binding during seven years from that date. In case neither of the high contracting parties shall have given notice to the other six months before the expiration of the said period of seven years of his intention to terminate the treaty it shall remain in force and shall not be held to have terminated until the expiration of six months from the date on which either of the parties shall have given notice of the termination to other party.

ARTICLE 9.

The treaty concluded between His Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and its Dependencies (then Ruler of Nejd and its then Dependencies) on the 26th December, 1915, shall cease to have effect as from the date on which the present treaty is ratified.

ARTICLE 10.

The present treaty has been drawn up in English and Arabic. Both texts shall be of equal validity; but in case of divergence in the interpretation of any part of the treaty the English text shall prevail.

ARTICLE 11.

The present treaty shall be known as the Treaty of Jeddah.

Signed at Jeddah on Friday, the 20th May, 1927 (corresponding to the 18th Zul-Qa'da 1345).

GILBERT FALKINGHAM CLAYTON.
FAISAL ABDUL-AZIZ AL SAUD.

Enclosure 2 in No. 43.

Sir G. Clayton to His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and its Dependencies.

Your Majesty,

I HAVE the honour to remind your Majesty that, in the course of our negotiations, which have happily resulted in the conclusion of a treaty of friendship and good understanding between His Britannic Majesty and your Majesty, the question of the frontier between the Hejaz and Transjordan was discussed, and I explained to your Majesty the position, as defined in a draft protocol submitted by me to you, which His Majesty's Government have taken up on this question and to which they must adhere.

His Majesty's Government regard the above-mentioned frontier as being defined as follows:—

"The frontier between the Hejaz and Transjordan starts from the intersection of meridian 38° E. and parallel 29° 35' N. which marks the termination of the frontier between Nejd and Transjordan, and proceeds in a straight line to a point on the Hejaz Railway 2 miles south of Mudawwara. From this point it proceeds in a straight line to a point on the Gulf of Aqaba 2 miles south of the town of Aqaba."

Respects.

GILBERT CLAYTON,

*His Britannic Majesty's
Commissioner and Plenipotentiary.*

Jeddah, May 19, 1927 (18th Zul Qa'da, 1345).

Enclosure 3 in No. 43.

*Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdul-Rahman al Faisal al Saud to His Britannic Majesty's
Commissioner and Plenipotentiary.*

(Translation.)

IN reply to your letter dated the 18th Zul Qa'da, 1345, on the subject of the Hejaz-Transjordan frontier, we note that His Majesty's Government adhere to their position, but we find it impossible, in the present circumstances, to effect a final settlement of this question. Nevertheless, in view of our true desire to maintain cordial relations based on solid ties of friendship, we desire to express to your Excellency our willingness to maintain the *status quo* in the Ma'an-Aqaba district, and we promise not to interfere in its administration until favourable circumstances will permit a final settlement of this question.

Respects.

(Sealed) ABDUL-AZIZ IBN ABDUL-RAHMAN AL SAUD.

19th Zul Qa'da, 1345 (May 21, 1927).

Enclosure 4 in No. 43.

Sir G. Clayton to His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Nejd and its Dependencies.

Your Majesty,

IN continuation of our conversations relating to the question of the slave trade, I have the honour to inform your Majesty that His Britannic Majesty's Government feel it their duty to abstain at present from renouncing the right of manumitting slaves, which has long been practised by His Majesty's consular officers, and which enables them to liberate any slave who presents himself of his own free choice with a request for liberation and repatriation to his country of origin.

I wish to assure your Majesty that His Britannic Majesty's Government's insistence on this right is not intended to mean any interference in the affairs of your Government or any infringement of your Majesty's sovereignty; but that it is due to His Britannic Majesty's Government's resolve to carry out a duty which they owe to humanity. I would add that His Britannic Majesty's Government will be prepared to consider the abolition of the right of manumission as soon as it becomes clear to both parties that the co-operation stipulated in article 8 of the Treaty of Jeddah has resulted in the enforcement of such practical measures as to render the exercise of the right of manumission no longer necessary.

I trust that your Majesty will appreciate the attitude of His Britannic Majesty's Government in this matter and that you will see fit to acquiesce in the procedure which I have described above.

Respects.

GILBERT CLAYTON,
*His Britannic Majesty's
Commissioner and Plenipotentiary.*

Jeddah, May 19, 1927 (18th Zul Qa'da, 1345).

Enclosure 5 in No. 43.

*Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdul-Rahman al Faisal al Saud to His Britannic Majesty's
Commissioner and Plenipotentiary.*

(Translation.)

IN reply to your Excellency's letter No. 2, dated the 18th Zul Qa'da, 1345 (19th May, 1927), relating to the manumission of slaves, I am confident that the British agent at Jeddah will always act in accordance with the spirit in which our agreement was arrived at, and that he will not permit any confusion as this might have undesirable effects on the administrative and economic aspects of this question.

Respects.

(Sealed) ABDUL-AZIZ IBN ABDUL-RAHMAN AL SAUD.

19th Zul Qa'da, 1345 (May 21, 1927).

Enclosure 6 in No. 43.

Sir G. Clayton to His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Nejd and its Dependencies.

Your Majesty,

WITH reference to the proposal put forward by your Majesty for the inclusion in the treaty of an article providing that His Britannic Majesty's Government should take no measures to prevent the purchase and importation of whatever arms, war material, ammunition, machines or implements which the Government of the Hejaz and Nejd may require for their own use, I have the honour to inform your Majesty that His Britannic Majesty's Government are of the opinion that this is a question which need not be dealt with in the body of the main treaty.

I am, however, empowered by His Britannic Majesty's Government to inform your Majesty that the embargo on the export of war materials to Arabia has been removed, and that, if your Majesty should see fit to place orders for arms, ammunition and war material with British manufacturers, in accordance with the conditions set forth in the Arms Traffic Convention (1925), for the use of the Government of the Hejaz and Nejd, His Britannic Majesty's Government will not prevent the export thereof or place any obstacle to their importation into your Majesty's territories.

I shall endeavour, in answer to your Majesty's desire, to present your Majesty with a copy of the convention referred to above as soon as may be.

Respects.

GILBERT CLAYTON,
*His Britannic Majesty's
Commissioner and Plenipotentiary.*

Jeddah, May 19, 1927 (18th Zul Qa'da, 1345).

Enclosure 7 in No. 43.

*Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdul-Rahman al Faisal al Saud to His Britannic Majesty's
Commissioner and Plenipotentiary.*

(Translation.)

IN reply to your letter dated the 18th Zul Qa'da 1345 (19th May, 1927) relating to arms, I wish to thank you for your statement which makes it clear that the importation of arms into Arabia is not prohibited.

Respects.

(Sealed) ABDUL-AZIZ IBN ABDUL-RAHMAN AL SAUD.

19th Zul Qa'da 1345 (May 21, 1927).

Enclosure 8 in No. 43.

*Sir G. Clayton to His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and its
Dependencies.*

Your Majesty,

WITH reference to article IV of the Treaty of Jeddah, I have the honour to confirm the statements I made to your Majesty in the course of our conversations, in which I stated that the sole object of the insertion of that article in the treaty is, first, to establish the present procedure formally, and, secondly, to furnish His Britannic Majesty's Government with such assurances as might enable them to bring that procedure to the notice of all Moslems in British territories.

I wish, moreover, to assure your Majesty that the presence of that article in the treaty does not affect and will not be interpreted as affecting the procedure relating to the belongings of deceased persons other than pilgrims, which remains subject to the rules of reciprocity which are the basis of the usual practice between independent countries.

Respects.

GILBERT CLAYTON,
*His Britannic Majesty's
Commissioner and Plenipotentiary.*

Jeddah, May 19, 1927
(18th Zul Qa'da, 1345).

Enclosure 9 in No. 43.

*Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdul-Rahman al Faisal al Saud to His Britannic Majesty's
Commissioner and Plenipotentiary.*

(Translation.)

IN reply to your letter dated the 18th Zul Qa'da 1345 (19th May, 1927) relating to the disposal of the belongings of our subjects in your territories and your subjects in our territories, I wish to assure your Excellency that the procedure will be, as you state, in accordance with international practice, by which we mean that the belongings will be entrusted to our tribunals, who will hand them over to the British agent after the legal formalities and the collection of the dues, and that, *mutatis mutandis*, the belongings of those of our subjects who may die in British territories will be handed over to us by the British agent at Jeddah.

Respects.

(Sealed) ABDUL-AZIZ IBN ABDUL-RAHMAN AL SAUD.

19th Zul Qa'da 1345 (May 20, 1927).

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No. 44.

Sir G. Clayton to Sir Austen Chamberlain.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 6, 1927.

WITH reference to my despatch of to-day's date, in which I submitted the report of my recent mission to Jeddah for the purpose of negotiating a treaty with the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a more detailed account of the course of the negotiations than appeared necessary in that report.

I have, &c.

GILBERT CLAYTON.

Enclosure in No. 44.

*Record of Conversations with His Majesty King Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdul-Rahman
al-Faisal Al Saud.*

1st Meeting.

HIS Majesty arrived in Jeddah by car on the morning of Monday, the 9th May, and received the mission at 2.30 P.M. on the same day.

This meeting was confined to greetings and the usual exchange of compliments, the King welcoming the mission with great cordiality. It was arranged to begin conversations on the following morning.

2nd Meeting.

The second meeting took place in the King's house at 9 A.M. on the 10th May, the following being present:—

The King, attended by Sheik Yusuf Yasin.
Sir Gilbert Clayton.
Mr. Jordan.
Mr. Antonius.

Sir G. Clayton opened the proceedings by giving a short account of the events which had occurred since his last mission to His Majesty, including—

- (a.) His journey to Palestine and Iraq for the purpose of explaining verbally to the local authorities the provisions of the Hadda and Bahra Agreements.
- (b.) The steps that he had taken to bring before His Majesty's Government the various requests which the King had put forward at Bahra, with special reference to his desire to conclude a general treaty with His

Majesty's Government which should take the place of the treaty concluded in 1915.

- (c.) His mission to the Imam Yahya, necessitating consultation with the Government of India and the Political Resident at Aden, and finally a journey to San'a.

- (d.) The conversations which had taken place with the Italian Government in regard to the respective interests of Great Britain and Italy in the Red Sea area, culminating in Sir Gilbert Clayton's visit to Rome and his discussions there with the Governor of Eritrea and officials of the Italian Foreign Office. (In regard to these conversations the King observed that, since they had taken place, he had noticed a certain diminution of Italian activity, and felt sure that they were having an excellent effect.)

Sir Gilbert Clayton concluded by saying that he had given this short history of events in order to show His Majesty that Arabian affairs had been occupying the close attention of His Majesty's Government during the last eighteen months or more, and that, having now received and studied a very full report of the conversations that had taken place at Wadi al 'Aqiq in December last, His Majesty's Government had reached conclusions, in regard to the various points of divergence, which were based on a thorough consideration of the situation viewed from every standpoint.

The King replied by a long dissertation on the political situation as affecting the Hejaz, the Yemen and Italy. He mentioned that he had received delegates from the Imam in Mecca and that he had written quite frankly in reply pointing out, first, that the Idrisi was his good friend and that he felt bound to protect him from aggression and, secondly, that the Imam's relations with foreign Powers should be so conducted as to cultivate the friendship of Great Britain while avoiding any entanglements with weaker Powers which might involve him in difficulties which would affect the whole of Arabia. He concluded by stating that he had received a friendly reply from the Imam, and went as far as to produce the actual letter.

He discussed, at some length, Italian policy in the Red Sea, with special reference to the Yemen, and expressed some anxiety as to the results which might arise from the Italian Treaty with the Imam Yahya.

Sir Gilbert Clayton assured His Majesty that the results of his conversations in Rome could in no way menace the interests of the Hejaz and Nejd. Indeed, the fact that both parties were agreed to abstain from any interference in the internal affairs of Arabia could only be to the advantage of Ibn Saud's Government.

Sir G. Clayton then briefly sketched the main points of the proposed treaty, regarding which he observed that substantial agreement had been reached at Wadi al 'Aqiq except on the following four major points:—

- (a.) The recognition of the position of His Majesty's Government in mandated territories.
- (b.) The question of the slave trade.
- (c.) The clause regarding nationality, to which Ibn Saud wished to add a provision which gave rise to serious consideration.
- (d.) The frontier between the Hejaz and Trans-Jordan as laid down in the draft protocol.

After informing the King that His Majesty's Government had decided to meet his views by not insisting on a specific recognition in the treaty of their position in mandated territories, Sir G. Clayton dealt with three other points and explained to Ibn Saud the various considerations which precluded His Majesty's Government from meeting his views, laying special stress on the questions of the slave trade and the Trans-Jordan frontier. He stated that he quite appreciated Ibn Saud's difficulties, but he was convinced, and he felt that he was also expressing the views of His Majesty, that to postpone settlement was likely to increase rather than decrease those difficulties.

Ibn Saud stated that he was quite confident of the good intentions and friendly spirit of His Majesty's Government and emphasised that he was not raising objections in any spirit of opposition to the principles upheld by His Majesty's Government, but that his difficulties were very real ones and such as he could not possibly ignore.

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3rd Meeting.

The third meeting was held at 9 A.M. on the 11th May, in the house set apart for the accommodation of the mission.

His Majesty opened the proceedings by referring to the question of the slave trade, and emphasised the fact that drastic measures would entail serious social dislocation and financial loss. He was unwilling to give any undertakings which he felt that he could not carry out, and, unless he was placed in a position to counteract the evil effects which he foresaw must ensue, he found it very difficult to meet the demands of His Majesty's Government. (This appeared to be an obvious hint for some form of compensation.) At the same time, he was entirely in agreement in principle with His Majesty's Government on the question of the slave trade, which was, in fact, contrary to the Sharia law, and it was only his conviction that serious disorganisation would result from drastic measures that prevented him from taking immediate action in the sense required.

Sir G. Clayton said that His Majesty's Government fully realised Ibn Saud's difficulties and had no desire to urge him to take measures which might be harmful or cause disorganisation of the social fabric, but they did ask for a declaration from him of the principles which were so strongly upheld by all civilised nations and a recognition of the right of manumission which had been exercised for many years. No British Government could possibly, in the face of public opinion, both in England and throughout the civilised world, subscribe to a treaty which did not condemn the practice of traffic in human lives, nor could they renounce the right of manumission which they now possessed and which was one of the means by which they were able to assist in combating the trade in slaves.

The nationality clause was then discussed, and Sir G. Clayton observed that he understood that Ibn Saud considered it liable to misinterpretation as trenching on the sovereignty of his Government; he had therefore suggested the addition of a clause which would make it clear that Hejaz law would run throughout his dominions both for foreigners and for natives. This raised an important question, as such a clause would imply the renunciation of certain rights which had been acquired by treaty with the Ottoman Government and which had been enjoyed by various foreign Governments as well as that of Great Britain. Sir G. Clayton said that he would study the question and see whether he could suggest a formula which would solve the difficulty.

The question of the protocol was then raised, and Sir G. Clayton pointed out the importance which His Majesty's Government attached to an early settlement of this question. The frontier suggested in the protocol, which was that which he himself had unofficially notified to His Majesty at Bahra, represented the final decision of His Majesty's Government, and there was no chance that delay in agreement would lead them to change their view.

His Majesty said that he had given much thought to this question, and had decided that, for reasons which he had already given, he was unable to sign the protocol at present, but he was prepared to promise that he would, pending final settlement, respect the frontier as defined in the protocol and give the necessary guarantees in the form of an exchange of letters. He begged His Majesty's Government not to force his hand at a time which was peculiarly unfavourable, when both his friends and his enemies would unite in blaming him if he took action which they would interpret as a renunciation of Moslem territory to a Christian Power. He felt convinced that, if his hand were not forced now, a satisfactory solution would be much more easily arrived at at a later date.

Ibn Saud's request for inclusion in the treaty of an article notifying the withdrawal of the embargo on the importation of arms was then discussed. Sir G. Clayton pointed out that His Majesty's Government did not consider that this was a suitable subject for inclusion in a treaty, but they were prepared to inform him, in writing, that the embargo was withdrawn and that, subject to the provisions of the Arms Traffic Convention of 1925, no obstacles would be placed in the way of his Government obtaining arms from British sources.

4th Meeting.

This meeting was held on the 12th May, at 9 A.M.

Sir G. Clayton informed His Majesty that His Majesty's Government were not asking him to abolish slavery at once throughout his dominions, and they fully realised the difficulties of his position and the necessity to avoid drastic and precipitate measures which would dislocate the social fabric of the country. What His Majesty's Government did require, however, was that His Majesty should undertake

to co-operate in suppressing the traffic in slaves by cutting off the sources of supply, thereby working gradually towards total abolition. Secondly, His Majesty's Government required His Majesty to recognise the right of manumission by His Britannic Majesty's consular officers. Manumission had been practised for many years, and, even were His Majesty's Government prepared to renounce it, they would be debarred from doing so by the force of public opinion, not only in England, but throughout the world.

Ibn Saud replied that he was entirely in favour, in principle, of the gradual abolition of slavery, and was even prepared to consider the early framing of laws which would prevent the importation of new slaves, for which he thought it would be possible to procure a "Fetwa" from his religious authorities. The practice of manumission by foreign consular officers was, however, intolerable and would never be admitted by the Ulema and the notables of the country.

Sir G. Clayton replied by pointing out that the right of manumission already existed, and that consequently His Majesty's Government were not asking for anything new, but merely for the recognition of an existing practice. He further observed that, while His Britannic Majesty's consul did not seek out slaves in order to manumit them, it was out of the question to agree that he should refuse asylum to fugitive slaves who might take refuge in the consulate, and abstain from facilitating their return to their homes. If slave-owners treated their slaves well they would minimise the chances of their wishing to obtain manumission.

Referring to the question of compensation, Sir G. Clayton pointed out that His Majesty's Government could never subscribe to such a system, which would be tantamount to tolerating, and even perhaps encouraging, an institution which they regarded with abhorrence and could never recognise in any form.

His Majesty then stated that he would not ask His Majesty's Government to renounce the right of manumission in the treaty, but would merely request a letter, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, waiving the right of manumission and agreeing that slaves who might take refuge at the British consulate should be turned away.

Sir G. Clayton stated that any such letter was quite out of the question.

After some further conversation, Sir G. Clayton said that he thought that the time had come when the best course would be for him to submit a draft of this article to His Majesty for his consideration and observations in the light of the conversations which had taken place.

Sir G. Clayton then informed Ibn Saud that His Majesty's Government attached considerable importance to the nationality clause which he also thought desirable from the point of view of the Government of the Hejaz and Nejd. The article as drafted contained nothing which could be held as encroaching upon the independence and sovereignty of Ibn Saud's Government, and the treaty would be incomplete without some such article. His Majesty agreed in principle, but maintained that a formula must be devised which would protect him from the misconstruction which was certain to be placed upon it in its present form and the consequent criticism to which he would be exposed. He was frankly nervous lest some veiled form of intervention or recognition of a right of interference should be involved.

Sir G. Clayton appreciated His Majesty's point of view, and stated that he would endeavour to find a means of removing His Majesty's apprehensions on this point.

It was then agreed that Sir G. Clayton should submit a draft treaty for Ibn Saud's consideration.

After the 4th meeting the mission presented a draft treaty (annexure), but before submitting a counter-draft Ibn Saud stated that there were several points, more particularly with regard to the protocol, which he would like to discuss further.

5th Meeting.

The 5th meeting, therefore, took place at the King's house at 2.30 P.M. on the 14th May. Shaikh Abdulla Damluji, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Shaikh Hafez Wahba were present at this meeting, in addition to those who had attended the previous meetings.

The King said that he would have liked to meet His Majesty's Government on the question of the protocol but regretted that he could not see his way to do so. He suggested the following ways of overcoming his difficulties:—

- (a.) Postponement of the question altogether.
- (b.) Submission by both parties to arbitration.

- (c.) An ultimatum on the subject to be issued to him by His Majesty's Government, couched in terms which would make it impossible for him to do anything but accept the state of affairs in spite of his strong objections to doing so.

He added that if no one of these courses was acceptable, could Sir G. Clayton suggest any other solution which would save him from the violent criticism to which his signature of the protocol would expose him?

Sir G. Clayton stated that His Majesty's Government were not in favour of postponement and wished this question to be settled now. He could not admit any proposal for arbitration as the question was one which must be settled between His Majesty's Government and Ibn Saud's Government without any outside interference. He stated further that His Majesty's Government, as mandatory for Trans-Jordan, were already in occupation of the frontier as defined in the protocol, and were merely asking Ibn Saud to recognise an existing state of affairs which they had no intention of altering. He reminded Ibn Saud that, although the state of hostilities which then existed between Nejd and the Hejaz had precluded any definite agreement in regard to the southern frontiers of Trans-Jordan at the time when the Hadda Agreement had been concluded, he himself had at that time informed His Majesty quite clearly of the frontier which His Majesty's Government had decided to maintain. He pointed out that Ibn Saud's right to the Hejaz, which His Majesty's Government were now recognising in the proposed treaty, was a right of conquest, and could not be extended to include territories which His Majesty's Government were holding on behalf of the mandated State of Trans-Jordan, whose officials were actually administering the territory in question, and whose interests His Majesty's Government were bound to secure.

Ibn Saud replied that he appreciated the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards the Arab country of Trans-Jordan, but pointed out that His Majesty's Government had also a duty towards their other friends (alluding to himself), adding that the only reason that he had not conquered Aqaba and Ma'an was that we had not allowed him to do so. In this connection he alluded to King Hussein's occupation of those territories.

Sir G. Clayton repeated that His Majesty's Government could not admit Ibn Saud's claim of conquest in regard to territories of which they were actually in occupation on behalf of another State. Ibn Saud had stated at a previous meeting that if actual settlement was postponed he would be prepared to give a full guarantee in writing to the effect that, pending final agreement, he would respect the *status quo* and refrain from aggression across the frontier as defined in the draft protocol. Sir G. Clayton said that he saw but little practical difference, from Ibn Saud's point of view, between the signing of such a letter and signature of the protocol. He was convinced that a final settlement of this question by signature of the protocol was the only satisfactory solution, and he urged the King to meet His Majesty's Government in this matter. He was prepared, however, to reserve his decision until he had had an opportunity of studying the draft letter which Ibn Saud proposed to write.

His Majesty said that he would submit a draft of the letter, and Sir G. Clayton, while still affirming his conviction that the signature of the protocol was the only satisfactory course to adopt, agreed to consider the draft in conjunction with the whole of the draft treaty.

In conclusion, Sir G. Clayton informed Ibn Saud, in regard to the suggestion of the issue by His Majesty's Government of what would practically amount to an ultimatum, that such a course would not commend itself to His Majesty's Government and was not in accordance with the spirit of his mission, the object of which was to settle the various questions at issue by mutual agreement.

The meeting then closed.

On the same evening the King forwarded to Sir G. Clayton a draft of the letter which he suggested writing on the subject of the southern frontier of Trans-Jordan, together with a counter-draft of a treaty.

6th Meeting.

The sixth meeting took place at the residence of the mission at 9 A.M. on the 16th May, the attendance being the same as at the fourth meeting.

Sir G. Clayton opened the proceedings by saying that since he had last seen His Majesty he had been considering his counter-draft and the draft letter which he

suggested in place of the protocol, and was now in a position to give to His Majesty a new draft which represented the limit to which he felt himself able to go. He felt that, before presenting the draft, it would be advisable for him to go briefly over the ground in so far as the major points at issue were concerned.

Sir G. Clayton started by discussing the protocol. He said that he had studied the draft letter suggested to him by His Majesty, but he could not admit that it met the requirements of His Majesty's Government. His Majesty's Government had laid down definitely what they considered that the frontier should be, and delay in agreement, while in no way tending to induce any change in the point of view of His Majesty's Government, would certainly create difficulties in the future and endanger that friendship and co-operation which the treaty was designed to confirm and strengthen. He could see no other satisfactory solution of this question than signature of the protocol by His Majesty.

In the second place, he wished to discuss the article regarding the chiefs on the Persian Gulf. His Majesty's Government, and particularly the Government of India, felt strongly on this question. They were unable to admit any wording which might be held to weaken the obligations which they were under to these chiefs, with whom they had definite treaty relations. They therefore wished to retain in the new treaty the wording of the similar article which appeared in the treaty of 1915.

Sir G. Clayton, however, wishing to meet His Majesty in every possible way, was prepared to accept the wording of Ibn Saud's draft, provided he would agree to the addition of the words "with whom His Majesty's Government have special treaty relations."

With regard to the question of slavery, Sir G. Clayton was prepared, in view of His Majesty's strong representations, to omit the clause dealing with the right of manumission from the body of the treaty itself, provided that His Majesty would accept from him a letter making it clear that His Majesty's Government would continue to exercise that right, at least until developments should render the practice obsolete.

Sir G. Clayton then informed His Majesty that he had found various alterations inserted in His Majesty's counter-draft, which had doubtless been included with a view to safeguarding the authority of the local tribunals. There was also the objection which Ibn Saud had put forward to the nationality clause, with the same object in view. After carefully studying the treaty as a whole and the various observations and objections made by Ibn Saud, he had decided that the most satisfactory course would be to take a bold step and to insert into the treaty an article which would make the situation quite clear and dispose of His Majesty's difficulties. He thought that Ibn Saud would agree that in taking this action a very valuable concession had been made, and one which was equivalent, from a practicable point of view, to a renunciation of rights acquired under the capitulatory system.

In conclusion, Sir G. Clayton emphasised the following advantages and concessions which the draft treaty gave to Ibn Saud and his Government:—

- (a.) His independence and sovereignty were fully recognised by Great Britain, who held a commanding position in the counsels of nations.
- (b.) The somewhat onerous treaty of 1915 was cancelled.
- (c.) He secured all the advantages which would accrue from complete understanding and amity with Great Britain.
- (d.) His Majesty's Government had met his views in regard to their special position in mandated territories.
- (e.) His Majesty's Government recognised fully the jurisdiction of Hejazi and Nejd courts in cases arising between British and Hejazi and Nejd subjects.
- (f.) His Majesty's Government were prepared to meet him by agreeing, with one small addition, to the wording which he suggested for the article referring to the chiefs of the Persian Gulf.
- (g.) His Majesty's Government had agreed to omit the manumission clause from the body of the treaty.

Against all this, His Majesty's Government only ask him to meet their wishes by signing the protocol dealing with the Trans-Jordan frontier and by accepting a letter which would make it clear that British consular officers would continue to exercise, as heretofore, the right of manumission.

His Majesty replied that he had no doubt as to the good intentions of His Majesty's Government, but that it must be borne in mind, especially in regard to the

question of the protocol, that both had many enemies who were only too ready to raise difficulties and to criticise if given the slightest opportunity of doing so. As regards the chiefs of the Persian Gulf, he had no intention of doing anything but maintaining peace with them, but he found some difficulty in admitting a clause which referred to treaties of which he had never seen the texts. He was prepared to accept a letter on the manumission question, but asked that it should contain an undertaking that British consuls would not seek out slaves with a view to granting manumission and would refrain from releasing his own so-called slaves, who were in reality either private servants or soldiers.

The new draft was then handed to His Majesty, and it was agreed that it should be discussed in committee by his advisers and Mr. Antonius, after which another interview would be held between Ibn Saud and Sir G. Clayton.

In the afternoon of the same day the King had a private and personal interview with Sir G. Clayton, and agreement was reached on the question of manumission and that of the Hejaz-Trans-Jordan frontier. In each case it was agreed to deal with the points at issue by means of an exchange of letters in terms to be drafted by Sir G. Clayton.

7th Meeting.

The seventh meeting took place at the mission's house, at 8.30 A.M., on the 18th May, 1927.

Sir G. Clayton opened the proceedings by informing Ibn Saud that he had received from him a letter on the previous evening which had caused him some surprise, as it indicated that His Majesty regarded as vital various entirely new points, which had been raised by his advisers in sub-committee and which in certain cases represented requests to which His Majesty's Government would be unable to accede. Sir G. Clayton added that he had hoped, after the satisfactory personal conversations which he had had with His Majesty on the previous day, that all the major points had now been settled.

His Majesty replied to the effect that the letter in question had been written and signed before his personal interview with Sir G. Clayton, after which he had endeavoured to recall it but had not been in time to do so.

Sir G. Clayton replied that he had felt sure that there was some satisfactory explanation of the letter, which did not quite harmonise with the excellent tone of the conversations up to date.

Before dealing with the various points in detail, Sir G. Clayton emphasised the fact that the negotiations for a treaty were taking place in consequence of a direct request made by Ibn Saud, and not at the instance of His Majesty's Government. He also pointed out that the draft which he had now brought with him had been framed after very careful consideration of the results of the discussions at Wadi al 'Aqiq, and that it was somewhat surprising to find a number of new points being raised which did not appear in the last draft submitted by Ibn Saud to Mr. Jordan.

In connection with the proposed article 6, Sir G. Clayton stated that he was unable to agree to any extension of its provisions. The article as it stood represented a great concession, and His Majesty's Government could not go as far as to admit that all British subjects should be tried by local courts. He strongly recommended the King to accept the clause as a considerable advance towards the ultimate object at which he was aiming.

The King then propounded various hypothetical cases to illustrate the difficulty in which he was placed owing to his courts not being fully recognised, to which Sir G. Clayton replied that His Majesty's Government was unable to advance further at present and cases such as had been quoted would have to be dealt with on their merits.

After considerable discussion, His Majesty stated that he must defer his decision pending further consideration, to which Sir G. Clayton replied that he could not change the attitude which he had taken up.

Sir G. Clayton then stated that it appeared to him that the suggested addition to article 4, which treated of the security of pilgrims, had now been dealt with under article 6, but Ibn Saud continued to urge that the word "subject" should be substituted for the word "pilgrim," thereby greatly extending the scope of the article.

Sir G. Clayton was unable to accept this proposal, pointing out that the article was merely designed to deal with the special case of pilgrims. He added, with some sharpness, that the draft which he had presented as representing the final views of

His Majesty's Government had been based on a careful study of the results achieved at Wadi al 'Aqiq, and that His Majesty's Government had not expected that a number of new points would be raised which had never even been mentioned in the course of the discussions with Mr. Jordan.

In regard to clause 3, Sir G. Clayton insisted on the retention of the word "undertake" in the first part of the article, but agreed to the insertion of the word "notifies" in the clause which deals with the safety of pilgrims and their property.

Sir G. Clayton agreed to certain minor modifications of wording asked for by Ibn Saud.

The last point discussed was the request of Ibn Saud that the words "the interests of" should be omitted from article 1. Sir G. Clayton objected to this omission, which he maintained would so reduce the scope of the article as to render it insufficient to meet the requirements of His Majesty's Government.

His Majesty, on the other hand, argued that the meaning as conveyed at present by the article was such as to give it too wide a scope.

After considerable discussion, it was agreed to postpone the question, together with those others still outstanding, for further consideration.

8th Meeting.

The eighth meeting took place at the King's house on the 19th May at 2 P.M.

After the seventh meeting the various points remaining at issue had been discussed at length in sub-committee by Mr. Antonius with Abdulla Bey Damluji and Shaikh Hafez Wahba, with the result that agreement had been reached on all points with the exception of that raised in connection with article 6.

Sir G. Clayton opened the eighth meeting by informing His Majesty that he understood that the only question remaining was one connected with the Capitulations which had arisen in discussion of article 6. He stated that it appeared, from the discussions of the sub-committee, that His Majesty would be unable to sign the treaty, unless Sir G. Clayton was prepared to inform him in writing that His Majesty's Government would raise no objection to the issue by Ibn Saud of a proclamation publicly abolishing the Capitulations. Sir G. Clayton informed His Majesty that, despite his sincere desire to meet him in every possible way, he was quite unable to give any such undertaking either verbally or in writing.

His Majesty replied that it was impossible for him, in spite of his sincere friendship and desire for intimate relations with Great Britain, to accept the Capitulations in any form. If he were to do so he would be betraying his country and his religion. He drew attention to the conditions of peace and security which now obtained in the Hejaz, and insisted that the Capitulations were unnecessary. If he should proclaim their abolition it would be a friendly act on the part of Great Britain to refrain from protest.

Sir G. Clayton replied that he thought that His Majesty was under some misapprehension. There was no question of any reassertion of the Capitulations; indeed, by conceding article 6 His Majesty's Government considered that they were making a great advance towards meeting His Majesty's wishes. It was quite another thing, however, to ask His Majesty's Government to abolish the Capitulations publicly, in so far as they were concerned, or to agree officially to refrain from protest should Ibn Saud proclaim their abolition himself. Sir G. Clayton stated that he felt sure that Ibn Saud's views on this question would receive full consideration by His Majesty's Government, and he was perfectly prepared to put those views before the proper authorities and to explain them fully. He urged that, from a practical point of view, it was much wiser for Ibn Saud to have patience and go slowly rather than precipitate a crisis which would do much more harm than good. It was for His Majesty to decide whether he was going to allow this question to prevent the conclusion of the treaty or whether he would reserve it as a matter for future consideration.

His Majesty emphatically denied that he was attributing to His Majesty's Government any desire to assert the Capitulations or that he had any distrust of His Majesty's Government's intentions, but he did not retreat from his position.

Sir G. Clayton urged that this question should be looked at from a practical point of view. It had never been raised before in its present form, even during the discussions at Wadi al 'Aqiq, and bearing in mind all the difficulties with which it was surrounded, it was not reasonable to bring it up at the present juncture in this acute form.

Ibn Saud replied that the question was one of life and death to him and his country and that he could not give way, earnestly though he desired to meet the wishes of His Majesty's Government, even at the expense of sacrifice to himself.

A long discussion then took place on the same lines, during which Sir G. Clayton made a strong personal appeal to His Majesty and urged him to consider the question most carefully before taking a decision; but the King appeared to remain unmoved.

Finally, Sir G. Clayton repeated that it was impossible for him to make such a statement as the King required; it was beyond his power to do so and he would only be deceiving both parties if he consented. If the King decided that he could not sign the treaty Sir G. Clayton hoped that he would give something in writing to that effect in order that he might be in a position to show his Government why it had been impossible to conclude a treaty.

Sir G. Clayton then took his leave, saying that he would now await the final word from His Majesty.

During the course of the evening the King's advisers had another long conference with Mr. Antonius, from which it eventually emerged that there was a certain degree of misunderstanding. It became evident that Ibn Saud's objection to article 6 was based on the fact that he was determined to sign nothing which might be interpreted as an admission of any form of capitulatory system; the attitude which he had taken up hitherto, and was determined to continue, was one of ignoring the Capitulations altogether and refusing to recognise their existence. In his endeavour to maintain this attitude, however, he had got himself into the position of insisting on their actual abolition and was now holding firmly to his point. It was eventually agreed by the sub-committee that the removal of article 6 and the inclusion of a supplementary sentence in article 5 might solve the difficulty, and a meeting with the King was arranged for the next day.

9th Meeting.

At the ninth meeting, held at the King's house at 8-30 A.M. on the 20th May, the suggestions put forward by the sub-committee were discussed between His Majesty and Sir Gilbert Clayton, and final agreement was reached.

It was then agreed that all points had now been settled, that the text of the treaty in English and Arabic should be put in hand immediately and that the treaty should be signed on the evening of the same day.

[E 2586/119/91]

No. 45.

Sir G. Clayton to Sir Austen Chamberlain.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 9, 1927.

IN connection with my recent mission to the Hejaz, I have the honour to inform you that, after the conclusion of the treaty, the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd had a long private conversation with me, the substance of which I promised to convey to His Majesty's Government.

2. He began by expressing the earnest hope that the treaty now concluded would not be regarded as a mere exchange of friendly sentiments, but as a prelude to effective co-operation in a combined policy designed to combat the various influences which were actively or potentially hostile to both parties.

He divided the Powers with which he was concerned into four categories, as follows:—

- (a.) Turkey and Russia, both of whom were definitely working against himself and Great Britain and influencing other Powers in that direction. He had good evidence of a design on the part of Russia to form a pact with Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan with the object of hostile action against Great Britain, and had actually been approached indirectly with a view to inducing him to join their combination.

In this connection he stated that the Russian consul-general at Jeddah had urged him to accept an invitation for his son Feisal to visit Moscow officially, offering as an inducement the employment of Russian influence to secure his recognition by Persia and Afghanistan. He had no intention of falling into any such net, but he quoted the proposal as an

instance of the intrigues which were going on. Incidentally, he exhibited considerable animus against the Persians, whom he described as sunk in religious degradation and unfit to associate with good Moslems.

- (b.) Italy and France, although not hostile, took every opportunity of advancing their interests at the expense of those of Great Britain. He quoted many instances of Italian activity, and expressed profound distrust of the policy which they appeared to be following. He was in touch with the Imam Yahya, and he hoped that their differences were capable of peaceful settlement, but he strongly deprecated foreign interference, and regarded with suspicion the present Italian relations with the Yemen.

- (c.) Egypt did not cause him any serious apprehension, but neither the King of Egypt nor his Government could be described as exactly friendly. He had some fear that extremist elements in Egypt might try to foment trouble with him in an endeavour to embarrass His Majesty's Government, with whom he was now in friendly treaty relations. He gave as an instance the attitude of the Egyptian Government in regard to the question of the Mahmal, maintaining that he was perfectly within his rights in refusing to accept an armed escort, which experience had now proved to be quite unnecessary, and in forbidding certain ceremonies and superstitious practices in connection with the observance of the pilgrimage, which were contrary to the tenets of Islam as laid down by the Prophet.

- (d.) Iraq and Transjordan would always be hostile to him as long as they were under the rule of members of the Hashimite family, all of whom cherished feelings of bitter enmity towards him. He observed in this connection that it was significant that difficulties with Iraq always coincided with the presence of a Ministry formed of men who were under King Feisal's influence; for instance, there had been little or no trouble when Saadun Bey was Prime Minister, but the situation had deteriorated since Jaafar Pasha had assumed office. Again, the friction and delays which had marked the proceedings of the tribunals charged with the settlement of claims for raids, especially in the case of Transjordan, seemed to point to hostile influence exerted against the interests of his people.

He had absolute trust in Great Britain and was confident of receiving fair treatment from His Majesty's Government as long as they held the mandates for Iraq and Transjordan, but he was impelled to draw attention to the facts of the situation and to warn them against influences which were incurably hostile to himself and would never cease to be exerted against him.

3. The King then entered into further detail in regard to the particular case of the tribunals for the settlement of claims on account of raids, with special reference to Transjordan, where he said that progress seemed to be impossible on the present lines. He said that, as regards past raids, he would be willing to accept the award of an arbiter, provided that a selected British officer was appointed, and he urged that this method of settling this vexed question be adopted in order to put an end to the friction and ill-feeling engendered by the present dilatory procedure. To facilitate speedy settlement in the future, he suggested the appointment of a British officer, experienced in Arab habits and customs, whose duty it would be to keep a constant watch over tribal affairs, and who would be the recipient of all details and information regarding raids as and when they took place. The tribunals would then have the advantage of the advice of an impartial authority who would be in a position to give them full and carefully sifted information.

4. In conclusion, the King urged that the treaty should be implemented by real co-operation on a definite plan, and begged that His Majesty's Government would keep him informed as to the lines on which their policy was designed so that he might conform effectively and with knowledge of what was required.

He felt also that clear evidence that the treaty was a really live instrument and meant sincere co-operation could only have a good effect on the general situation.

I promised the King that I would convey his views to His Majesty's Government, and I restricted my own remarks to a few general observations.

I assured him of my belief that His Majesty's Government would certainly wish to cement the good relations now established by co-operation in all matters in which the interests of the two countries were concerned.

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With reference to France and Italy, I emphasised the close and friendly relations which existed between Great Britain and those two countries; they had been our allies in the war, and, although minor points of difference might arise from time to time, it was not to be thought that they would adopt a policy designed to injure British interests. In this connection, I informed the King of the conversations which I had carried out in Rome with the Italian authorities, and gave him a general idea of their purport.

As regards Transjordan and Iraq, I endeavoured to reassure the King, explaining that, whatever may have been his relations with the Hashimite Princes in the past, he need have no fear of personal enmities being permitted to influence Government policy so long as Great Britain was responsible as mandatory Power.

With regard to the various detailed proposals put forward by Ibn Saud, I said that I could give no immediate opinion or reply, as the questions raised would require consideration by His Majesty's Government in consultation with the local Governments concerned.

I have, &c.
GILBERT CLAYTON.

[E 2620/119/91]

No. 46.

Consul Stonehewer-Bird to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 62.)

Sir,

Jeddah, May 29, 1927.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 18 of to-day's date, I have the honour to transmit herewith a translation of an official communiqué published in the "Um-el-Kura" of yesterday's date, announcing the conclusion of a Treaty of Friendship and Good Understanding between His Britannic Majesty and the King of the Hejaz, Nejd and its dependencies.

2. A copy of this despatch and its enclosure is being sent to His Majesty's High Commissioner for Egypt.

I have, &c.
F. H. W. STONEHEWER-BIRD.

Enclosure in No. 46.

Treaty of Jeddah between Hejaz-Nejd and Great Britain.

AS previously announced, Sir Gilbert Clayton arrived in Jeddah with a mission comprising himself, Mr. Jordan and Mr. Antonius, empowered to negotiate with the Hejaz-Nejd Government a Treaty of Friendship and Good Understanding based on a recognition of complete national and sovereign independence.

The negotiations lasted about ten days and resulted in the conclusion of a treaty on the aforesaid basis. His Highness the Emir Feisal, plenipotentiary of His Majesty the King, signed on behalf of the Hejaz and Nejd and its dependencies, and Sir Gilbert Clayton signed on behalf of the British Government. The treaty will come into force after ratification by His Britannic Majesty and by the King of the Hejaz, Nejd and its dependencies. The text of the treaty will be published when the contracting parties shall have exchanged ratifications.

[E 2629/22/91]

No. 47.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received June 14.)

(No. 449.)

Sir,

Rome, June 8, 1927.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a memorandum by the air attaché to this Embassy, reporting the arrival in Italy of a party of young men from the Yemen for the purpose of a course in flying. They were prominent figures on the occasion of the Royal review held in Rome on the 5th instant.

2. It is also reported in the press that a mission of about ten persons, headed by the second son of the Imam, is shortly to visit Italy with the object, apparently, of paying a visit of ceremony to the King and the Italian Government. It is stated that this mission will, after a short stay in Rome, make a tour of all the most important cities of the country, paying special attention to the main industrial centres.

I have, &c.
R. GRAHAM.

Enclosure in No. 47.

Memorandum.

THERE have arrived in Italy from the Yemen twelve young nobles who are to undergo a flying training course. One of them is reputed to be a son of the King of the Yemen and wears a blue turban with gold trimmings. All the others wear yellow turbans. They are dressed in khaki uniform.

Air attaché saw the party at the review on the 5th June and received the above explanation.

The party proceeds to Milan this week to take the course at the Breda School.

Air attaché understands that the little flying school reported in his 31/27 of the 24th January, 1927, is still in existence, but that none of the party which has now come to Italy has had any previous instruction in flying.

J. N. FLETCHER,
Wing Commander and Air Attaché.

Rome, June 7, 1927.

[E 2849/644/91]

No. 48.

Acting Consul Stonehewer-Bird to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received June 27.)

(No. 65. Secret.)

Sir,

Jeddah, June 1, 1927.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith my report on the situation in the Hejaz during the period the 26th April to the 31st May, 1927.

2. Copies of this report are being sent to Egypt, Jerusalem, Bagdad, Aden, Delhi, Beirut (for Damascus), Khartum (through Port Sudan), Singapore and Lagos.

I have, &c.
F. H. W. STONEHEWER-BIRD.

Enclosure in No. 48.

Jeddah Report for the Period April 26 to May 31, 1927.

THE period under review has been full of event. It has seen the arrival and departure of Sir Gilbert Clayton, the King's return to the Hejaz, and the influx of a greater number of pilgrims than the country has seen since the days of the Turkish domination.

2. Sir Gilbert Clayton arrived in Jeddah on the 2nd May in H.M.S. "Dahlia." He had reached Port Sudan a week earlier, but, in the absence of any definite information as to the date of Ibn Saud's return to the Hejaz, had preferred to remain some days in the Sudan rather than cross immediately and await His Majesty's pleasure for an indefinite time. The conference actually began on the 10th May and came to a successful termination on the 21st May. The following official statement appeared in the "Um-el-Kura" of the 27th instant:—

"Treaty of Jeddah between Hejaz-Nejd and Great Britain.

"As previously announced, Sir Gilbert Clayton arrived in Jeddah with a mission comprising himself, Mr. Jordan and Mr. Antonius, empowered to negotiate with the Hejaz-Nejd Government a treaty of friendship and good understanding based on a recognition of complete national and sovereign independence. The negotiations lasted about ten days and resulted in the

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conclusion of a treaty on the aforesaid basis. His Highness the Emir Feisal, Plenipotentiary of His Majesty the King, signed on behalf of the Hejaz and Nejd and its dependencies, and Sir Gilbert Clayton signed on behalf of the British Government. The treaty will come into force after ratification by His Britannic Majesty and by the King of the Hejaz, Nejd and its dependencies. The text of the treaty will be published when the contracting parties shall have exchanged ratifications."

3. The negotiations were conducted by the King himself assisted by Sheikh Hafiz Wahba and Dr. Abdullah Damluji, both of whom were summoned to Jeddah for the purpose. A house at Kundara, some 2 miles from Jeddah, was placed at the disposal of the mission for the period of the negotiations. The arrangements made by the local authorities for Sir Gilbert's comfort and the staff work on his arrival at and departure from the Hejaz were excellent. It would be out of place in this report to touch on the terms of the treaty or on the progress of the negotiations, but it is perhaps permissible to pay tribute to Sir Gilbert Clayton's tact and charm of manner which endeared him to all with whom he came in contact here.

4. His Majesty King Ibn Saud arrived in Jeddah on the morning of the 9th May. Except for a short stay in Mecca he had come direct from Riyadh by car. The journey lasted ten days, and the actual driving time was forty-four hours for the 650 miles separating Riyadh from Jeddah. At Riyadh he received 3,000 Nejd chiefs who had assembled ostensibly to express their loyalty, but in reality to obtain from him assurances that he would not depart from strict Wahabite tenets. The attitude of the chiefs appears to have been somewhat critical; they feared lest the King should, in the Hejaz, allow outside influences to work on him and depart from the strait and narrow path of the true faith; the King could count on their loyalty to him, but they must be able to count on his loyalty to Islam. Ibn Saud in a moving speech succeeded in convincing his hearers that they need have no fear; he would always look to Allah to guide his footsteps in the paths of piety; no considerations could sway him from strict adherence to their principles. The warlike chiefs were, the "Um-el-Kura" tells us, reduced to tears, and the meeting broke up to the accompaniment of loud expressions of undying loyalty. Ibn Saud has no easy task; he has to study the feelings and desires of his Wahabi followers, yet he cannot afford to offend other sects of Islam, as by so doing he slays the geese that lay the golden eggs. The Hejaz is devoid of resources, exports are negligible, imports are few. The one important source of revenue is the pilgrimage. By the pilgrimage the Hejaz lives. Anti-Saud propaganda in Moslem countries has had little effect; the Persians alone have held back for religious reasons—only some 600 have arrived as against 7,000 or 8,000, the normal pre-war quota from Persia. Ibn Saud's refusal to accept the Mahmal this year and the consequent official pronouncement of the Egyptian Government that Egyptian pilgrims must perform the Haj at their own risk do not appear to have affected to any marked extent the numbers of Hajis from Egypt.

5. The total number of pilgrims who have arrived by sea is roughly 110,000, and will probably reach 120,000 by the 6th June, the date fixed for the arrival of the last ship. There will be some 60,000 to 70,000 pilgrims from the interior. The grand total will thus be very little short of 200,000. It is inevitable that with this influx there should be numerous complaints against the Government, the local authorities and the steamship companies. This agency has dealt in the period under review with a formidable sheaf of complaints. The readiness of the Government and the local authorities to stop the abuses complained of has been worthy of high praise. On one occasion, on representations from this agency, a motor car company was fined £160 and obliged to refund various sums levied on hirers of cars in excess of the rate fixed by the Government. The official rate is £15 from Jeddah to Medina and back, and £1 5s. to Mecca. There are at present only 160 cars and small lorries to meet the needs of the many thousands of pilgrims who can afford this mode of travel. It is thus by no means easy to enforce a fixed rate when the law of supply and demand would make it possible for owners to exact and obtain the most exorbitant rates. Complaints as to loss of baggage have been fewer this month, as, at the request of the agency, mutawwifien are now held personally responsible for any loss sustained by pilgrims under their charge. Much thought is being given to the problem of shipping Indian pilgrims back to India after the Haj with a minimum of confusion and of expense to the Government of India. One shipping company was inclined to jib at the emergency pass system whereby a return passage is issued gratis in spite of the loss of a return ticket or deposit pass, on condition that such loss is reported

by the Indian pilgrimage officer in sufficient time to ensure that a passage is not issued against the lost ticket and pass. A very strong letter was addressed to the company, and their objections were consequently withdrawn. Among the complaints made, many were frivolous and no action was taken. A notable example of this latter class of complaint was a formal protest lodged by a prominent Indian that his bath water on board ship was salt and not fresh. There is a tendency on the part of the better-class pilgrims to regard the Haj as a luxury tour, the Government of India and His Majesty's consul at Jeddah standing *in loco* Thomas Cook. Letters of recommendation heighten the illusion, and it is comforting to note that these are very sparingly given.

6. Pilgrims from British and British-protected territory have arrived in the following numbers:—

India	...	...	...	...	30,125
Malaya	...	...	...	...	12,173
Sudan	...	...	...	...	898
East Africa	...	...	...	...	104

7. So much of the Government's time and thought has been devoted to questions connected with pilgrimage that other matters of importance have been relegated. Moreover, in the absence of Ibn Saud and Dr. Damluji, the efforts of the Emir Feisal and Yusuf Yassin, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, were devoted to evolving a system whereby no decision should be arrived at and no request acceded to until His Majesty's return. Yusuf Yassin is an arch obstructionist and hair-splitter; he takes a jaundiced view of life; he is a sallow-faced young man who carries his Syrian nose as though in the presence of a bad smell, and one suspects that one is oneself the bad smell in question. He has no experience except as a second-rate journalist, and has succeeded in making himself cordially disliked by all foreigners. It is unfortunate that a youth of this calibre should be placed even for a month in a position of importance. It is to be hoped that Dr. Abdullah Damluji will remain in the Hejaz if and when Ibn Saud returns to Nejd.

8. For some time past attention has been given by the local authorities to the question of an electric light installation in Jeddah. It was hoped that the contract would be given to a British firm and that the Hejaz Government would take on and work the installation. The Government have decided, however, to give the concession to a Mahometan firm; the latter will doubtless call on a British firm to effect the first installation. Amongst other improvements which are to be introduced is a new condenser capable of producing 100 tons of water per day, and, it is hoped, an ice-making plant.

9. Mr. Philby has returned to Jeddah from Egypt, where he spent a fortnight. Speculation was rife as to the object of his journey. Rumour had it that his visit was not unconnected with a minor surgical operation which must perforce be undergone by those about to embrace Islam. There is no doubt that Mr. Philby does coquet at times with the idea of a change of faith, but there is good reason to believe that the King would not view the change with a favourable eye. Mr. Philby's real object in visiting Egypt was, there can be little doubt, the obtaining of the contract for the lighting of Jeddah, as he returned here accompanied by Mr. Roy of the Associated British Manufacturers (Egypt) (Limited). While in Egypt he gave an interview to a representative of the "Balagh." There is little of real interest in the interview as reported. After informing the "Balagh" that he has obtained the agency in the Hejaz for Ford cars, he gives his views on the treaty negotiations; Capitulations he wishes to see abolished, the Maan-Akaba territory ought to be handed over to the Hejaz. The British Government, he states, are wise to make a treaty, and so repair many of their past errors of policy.

10. The much advertised Russian trade exhibition ship has arrived, bringing 360 pilgrims and a hundred cases of samples. The customs authorities are refusing to allow the latter through without examination. The Soviet representative is subdued: the number of pilgrims stated to be arriving this year has been given at various times as 10,000, 4,000 and until recently as 2,000; he feels he has been badly let down. It was felt that the risk of Bolshevik agents arriving with the pilgrims was considerable. Strong representations were made before the arrival of the ship severally by the British, Dutch and Egyptian consuls to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The latter fully realised the responsibility of the Hejaz Government for ensuring that Bolshevik ideas should not be disseminated among the pilgrims, and promised to keep the very strictest watch. An attempt is being made by the

Russians, by offering minimum fares (250 rupees return), to induce Afghan pilgrims to travel in future via Odessa.

11. Five slaves have been manumitted and repatriated during the month under review. Two cases presented a certain interest. An unattractive young woman of Abyssinian origin took refuge in this agency early in May. Her story was that the son of her master, the Mayor of Jeddah, had made a successful attempt on her virtue, with the result that in six months time there would be a little stranger in the house of the mayor. The mayor knowing nothing of this breach of family etiquette was likely to show displeasure, and the son, fearing the paternal wrath, tried to force the young lady by illegal means to remove the fruit of his misbehaviour. The lady resenting this, there were domestic scenes of some violence. The father was meanwhile in Mecca. My Italian colleague rang up to say that the son of the mayor had asked him to intercede with the British agency for the return of the slave on the grounds that the latter, being *enceinte*, had the right to her freedom by Moslem law. In order to avoid taking any action which might hamper Sir Gilbert Clayton in his discussion of the question of manumission, it was decided to hold the slave until after the conclusion of the negotiations, and then to afford the mayor an opportunity of airing his views. The mayor proved reasonable and agreed that, as the woman did not wish to return to him, and that, as, whatever rights she might acquire if she eventually provided his son with an heir, she was at the moment a slave, the agency had no choice but to repatriate her. On another occasion the French consul asked for assistance in repatriating a manumitted slave. It was the first time for five years that a French consul had exercised the right of manumission. He wished the agency to show their solidarity, in other words, to allow the agency kavass to accompany the slave on board, and so to share any odium which might attach to his action. Other nationalities make so little attempt to pull their weight in the matter of manumission that it is the current belief among slaves that only the British agency has this right.

12. There have been rumours and reports of the mobilisation of forces on the Yemen frontier, but it does not seem probable, from information received, that Ibn Saud is anxious to join issue with the Imam. At the same time, he has to provide occupation and recreation for his tribes, and raiding expeditions have hitherto been their only pastime. The King has been endeavouring to induce some of the nomad tribes to form agricultural colonies and settle down to pastoral pursuits, but I gather without any marked success.

13. Among important personages who have visited the Hejaz during the last month are the following:—

Moulana Abdul Kadir Kasoori, the president of the Panjab Khilafat Committee. He will be in close touch with Ibn Saud during his stay in the Hejaz, and it is to be hoped that his anti-British sentiments will leave no mark on His Majesty.

Tofik Bey Esh Sherif, the secretary-general of the Islamic Conference held last year. He arrived by steamship "Gorgistan" on the 2nd May from India, where he has been for the last eight months, engaged, so he stated, in carrying on propaganda in favour of Ibn Saud.

Dr. Abdul Ghani, ex-director of Public Instruction in Afghanistan, principal of Habibia College. He hopes to obtain the post in the Hejaz Government of Director of Public Instruction.

Kadhi Ahmed-el-Ansi, the Imam of the Yemen's representative at Angora. He was accompanied to Mecca by the Soviet consul and Mahmoud Nedim Bey, counsellor to the Turkish representative here and one time Vali of the Yemen. Mahmoud Nedim Bey is said to be leaving in the near future for Turkey. It is thought that he may eventually go to the Yemen as Turkish representative to the Imam.

14. The tribunal set up under the Hadda agreement for investigating Nejd-Transjordan claims has received another set-back. On the 10th May the Nejd delegates presented a memorandum expressing the view of the Hejaz-Nejd Government that the claims presented by Transjordan were fictitious and that it was useless in these circumstances to continue the sittings. Ibn Saud has been requested to suspend his judgment until he has had an opportunity of studying the report of the president.

15. As regards the tribunal set up at Koweit, the Hejaz-Nejd Government find it is impossible to collect all the necessary claimants and witnesses in less than four

months, and have suggested fixing the 1st of Jemad-el-Awal (the 26th October) as the date for holding the tribunal.

16. Public health in the Hejaz has on the whole been better than might have been expected. There was an outbreak of small-pox in Mecca, which, in the first fortnight of May, began to assume somewhat alarming proportions; it has, however, subsided and cases are very few. An endeavour was made to induce all the inhabitants of Mecca to be vaccinated, but vaccination was not made compulsory. It would be advisable, if this can be done without wounding religious susceptibilities, to introduce compulsory vaccination of pilgrims before they leave India or Singapore. There are several cases of malaria and dysentery, and a few cases of typhoid fever and pneumonia. Several wells are stated to have been found at Muna, and no complaint has yet been made of a shortage of water at Mecca. The appointment of an assistant doctor has been sanctioned by the Government of India. The need of such an assistant has been much felt this year.

17. A list of shipping of all nationalities is appended.

18. H.M.S. "Dahlia" paid two visits to Jeddah during the period under review, bringing, on the 26th April, the newly-appointed agent and consul and Mr. Jordan, and, on the 2nd May, Sir Gilbert Clayton and Mr. Antonius.

Appendix.

Shipping of all Nationalities which arrived in Jeddah during the Period under Review.

Nationality.	Port from whence came.	Number of Ships.
British	Bombay	12
"	Karachi	2
"	Calcutta	2
"	Aden	2
"	Port Sudan	2
"	Suez	6
"	Singapore	3
"	Penang	1
"	Tripoli	1
"	Tunis	1
		32
Dutch	Batavia	1
"	Mombasa	1
		2
Egyptian	Beirut	1
Greek	Beirut	1
Italian	Suez	15
"	Massowah	3
"	Tunis	1
		19
Russian	Odessa	1
Turkish	Constantinople	1
		1
Total number of ships of all nationalities		57

CHAPTER II.—SYRIA.

[E 44/44/89]

No. 49.

Consul Hole to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received January 4, 1927.)

(No. 321. Confidential.)

Sir,

Damascus, December 22, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to refer to my report on Syrian affairs No. 308, Confidential, of the 25th November.

2. Apart from the changes in the Cabinet (see my despatch No. 312 of the 6th December), nothing of interest occurred in the first fortnight following the date of my despatch. Syria remained in a state of suspended animation, awaiting the appearance of the High Commissioner, who was announced regularly each day for the morrow. Hostilities were at a standstill, except for the customary aerial bombardments of the Leja and the reported abolition by the Nationalists of a French outpost at Euteibe, at the extreme end of the Ghouta. Native newspapers affirmed that the Egyptian Committee had suspended hostilities to further the happy progress of mysterious negotiations elsewhere; the chief cities of Syria elected deputations to present their desiderata to M. Ponsot.

3. Early on the 9th the High Commissioner arrived by car and left immediately for Soneida. In the absence of authorised explanations of this journey, popular fancy dwelt affectionately on an interview between M. Ponsot and Sultan Attrash. Whatever may have been M. Ponsot's intentions, they included a visit to Salkhad, which the heavy rains prevented.

4. He arrived on the 11th at Damascus and installed himself in a house successively occupied by the Emir Feisal and Subhi Barakat, a couple of hundred yards outside the barbed-wire defences of the city, which were extended to protect it. So far his peace has been entirely respected. The weather has been less considerate, and on the first day of his stay a temporary wall masking certain outbuildings offensive to European eyes collapsed under the weight of the swollen Tora, which deposited it in the courtyard with much of the outbuildings themselves.

5. The first few days were spent by M. Ponsot in his house, receiving the French personnel, and subjecting them to a stiff examination; each official was required to submit a report on his own department, with suggestions for possible improvements. Two of the *conseillers* have told me that they were amazed at his grasp of their subjects (finance and justice), and the same impression seems to prevail in other departments. The High Commissioner was as non-committal to his own staff as to all others.

6. In the meantime the delegations from Homs and Hama arrived and were instructed, like that of Damascus, to select three persons to represent each of them. The Damascus delegation chose Ihsan Bey Sherif, Colonel Ahmed Laham and Yussef-el-Isa (see paragraph 4 of my despatch under reference), the first two of their own free will and the last because of a strong hint from French quarters. Ihsan Bey Sherif is an able lawyer with an excellent command of French and a capable representative of the Syrian *intelligentsia*; Colonel Laham is equally representative of the popular view; Yussef-el-Isa is an unscrupulous time-server and represents little but his own interests.

7. The Damascus delegation was received twice by the High Commissioner; the Syrian desiderata (see paragraph 5 of my despatch under reference) were submitted; and in conversation each of the three members contributed his personal opinion on his special subject, Ihsan Bey Sherif on judicial matters, Colonel Laham on national militia and Yussef-el-Isa on the freedom of the press.

8. Although he made no declaration with regard to his intentions, the French High Commissioner seems by his attitude to have encouraged his interlocutors to draw optimistic conclusions. He definitely invited open discussion and frank criticism, such as was never dreamt of under Generals Weygand, Gouraud and Sarraïl; and he admitted that in every Syrian centre essentially the same demands had been submitted. He finally announced his impending departure for France, where he would "seek a solution for the existing problem which would be of equal benefit to both parties."

9. There have been a number of ponderous official festivities during the week, at one of which, a banquet given by the President of the State of Syria, some

two hundred persons were present, including the consular corps. No speeches were allowed, and the High Commissioner wore an expression of profound gloom. There have also been a succession of conferences of French high officials, at one of which all the High Commissioner's delegates in Syria, Generals Gamelin, Vallier and Desclaux, the chief of the Intelligence Service and many others were present.

10. M. Ponsot is undoubtedly giving his earnest attention to the Syrian problem. He left for Beirut yesterday and is expected to proceed to France before the end of the year; and in view of the high esteem in which he is held at the Quai d'Orsay, it may be hoped that the end of the trouble is in sight.

Copies of this despatch have been sent to Beirut (No. 265), Jerusalem (No. 199), Bagdad (No. 197), Amman (No. 228) and Aleppo.

I have, &c.

E. C. HOLE.

[E 471/44/89]

No. 50.

Consul-General Satow to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received January 28.)

(No. 11. Confidential.)

Sir,

Beirut, January 17, 1927.

THE end of 1926 found the whole of the French mandated territory still in a state of expectation. M. Ponsot has not yet finished the series of enquiries and investigations on which he set to work soon after his arrival in August, and during the whole time he has observed himself and has succeeded in causing to be observed by others a sphinx-like reserve, which, if it has annoyed the journalists and politicians, has nevertheless inspired respect. There are, however, indications that his task of investigation is nearly finished, and I should not be surprised if within the next ten or fifteen days he leaves quietly for Paris. There is a general uncertainty as to what will be the result of his visit and as to the extent of the changes which are impending. One rather amusing result of this uncertainty is that many of the French ladies have not thought it worth while this winter to arrange the "At Home days" of which they are so fond. They feel that, before they have really got going, their husbands may be sent off.

2. Quite apart from the final liquidation of the Druse Nationalist revolt and its aftermath of sporadic disorder, and the placing of the relations between the different States on a footing satisfactory to all of them, if this is, indeed, possible, there is much to be done in the way of a general reorganisation of the administration throughout the whole country. During the Sarraïl and de Jouvenel régimes the main energy of the authorities was devoted to politics, and matters of practical importance were neglected. There are thus the arrears of nearly two years to be made good.

3. When M. de Jouvenel left, as it fortunately turned out, never to return, he left behind him a Lebanon endowed with an up-to-date Constitution, fitted with all the latest improvements. The details of this have been reported to you. This Constitution was accepted at the time with a certain cynical amusement, but dissatisfaction was even then expressed and has since been growing. Quite recently the Senate Commission decided to demand the abolition of three out of the seven Ministries, viz., those of Agriculture, Public Health and Education. Considering that the Minister of Agriculture is a Metuali, who obtained his post because, as the President of the Republic himself said to me, a Metuali had to be got into the Cabinet somewhere, and that his main claim to fame is that, through his inert inefficiency, he has facilitated the spread of cattle plague through the country; that what is done in the public health line is mainly due to the energy of Dr. Dugnet, the French Army Principal Medical Officer, who is also in charge of civil health matters at the High Commission; and that the bulk of the education in the country is conducted by non-official establishments, these three Ministers might well disappear. For a small country like the Lebanon, an energetic Head of the State, such as President Debbas is unfortunately not, and two, or at the most three, Heads of Departments under him should suffice. Some change on these lines will probably materialise and can easily be made, as I have it on the best authority that the present Constitution has never been approved by the French Government. It all rests on the signature of M. de Jouvenel, whom, as my informant said, it is not possible to disavow too quickly or too completely.

[16696]

4. The Administration works haltingly and inefficiently, while the Senate and the Chamber talk at length, but vainly. Of the two bodies the Senate seems to inspire more respect. The Chamber apparently inspires none. It is the same body as was elected in rather scandalous circumstances under the Sarraïl-Cayla régime. It is perhaps worth mentioning here that, shortly after the arrival of M. Ponsot, new presidents of both Chambers had to be elected. It was typical of the changed conditions that the High Commission in no way interfered as regards the Chamber, and that if, as is believed, it did intervene as regards the Senate, this was to ensure the election of a Moslem President and to prevent Christians being elected to both presidencies, which would have had a disturbing effect on the considerable Moslem element. In all previous elections the official candidate was known practically from the beginning.

5. From the point of view of the foreigners, the Departments which have the most importance are Justice and the Interior, which controls the police and gendarmerie. I have already reported in my confidential despatch No. 211 of the 23rd November last as to the unsatisfactory condition of the courts. There is no improvement to record since that despatch was written. There are, however, indications that the authorities are contemplating what will be more or less a return to the old system of special courts for foreign cases. This will be, if it eventuates, a retrograde step, but, on the other hand, it will have the advantage, assuming that the proceedings will be in French, that all the judges will understand what is going on. As for the police, it is neither efficient nor honest. There is at present an unpleasant scandal in progress. In the middle of December the native chief of the "flying squad" was caught red-handed taking money from one of the various secret gambling dens which have come into existence since gambling was officially suppressed. At one time it looked as if the matter, which was likely to involve his superior, who is known as the chief of the judicial police, might be hushed up. But apparently the authorities have decided to brave things out, as the said superior was arrested a few days ago. Both he and his subordinate were able police officers, but in other respects their record is doubtful. They are believed to have been very useful to their French superiors in the past, and for this reason their various malpractices were tolerated. Some other scandals are coming to light, and recently there have been several arrests and suspensions of officials in the Lebanese Public Health Department, mainly in connection with the hospital for venereal diseases.

6. Reference has been made already to the inefficiency of the Lebanese Agricultural Department. Cattle plague actually passed, I believe, into Palestine from Syria, but there has been a lot of it in the Lebanon. Things have now got to the stage where the authorities are contemplating the use of serum which was successfully employed in Palestine, but they seem still to be investigating whether it cannot be made here. This perhaps does not much matter as the horse has long since been stolen. Cereal crops suffered much from an insect called "souné." The various citron trees are much infected with scale disease. The authorities at one time contemplated action, and even got so far as to edict measures to be taken. There was an outcry as to the cost and the trouble, and the matter was, therefore, dropped.

7. As regards public works, a beginning was made in 1926 with road construction on new and more durable lines. Part of the Damascus road was laid in porphyro-asphalt and another section in concrete sprayed with a tar preparation. The first system seems to be satisfactory, but the second is less so. The Lebanon has, of course, too large a road mileage for its size and population, and the upkeep is costly. On the whole, the roads are still bad. More might be achieved if the work, even if done on present lines, were better done and better controlled. It is safe to assume that there is still a fair amount of dishonesty in the Public Works Department and that the contractors and their friends make a good thing out of the contracts.

8. The Beirut Municipality showed considerable, if some lop-sided, activity during the year. It must be given credit for what has been done to rebuild the areas pulled down by Azmi Bey during the war. A number of large, if unbeautiful, buildings have been erected, and some of the main streets have been properly paved. On the other hand, it has neglected the residential quarters, although it is now trying to atone by superficial repairs for that neglect. I believe that it would be well if on the Municipal Council there could be some foreign members who could set a good example. The French have for some time past accepted this idea in principle, and

in the spring things had got so far that the date of the elections had been fixed and foreign candidates were in the field. Then the whole thing was postponed *sine die*.

9. The Customs Administration, where there is a large French staff, is the object of constant criticism, of which some at least seems to be justified. The formalities are still most complicated and lengthy, and the Administration is constantly issuing new decrees and orders. It has, of course, a difficult task, as it is all the time trying to cope with attempts at fraud, often of a most ingenious nature. The French inspector-general seems to enjoy much latitude and was recently described to me by a French official as a "satrap." He claims to have deserved well of the State in that his Department provides most of the money. This is true, but it is not so difficult with a 25 per cent. import duty. Many hold that this is too high, and personally I share the view. But despite this and the difficulties which were created during the year by the vagaries of the franc, things do not seem to be as bad as the pessimists would like to make out. Much private building is being carried on, and motor cars abound. These are not symptoms of an acute crisis, and I think there is little doubt but that the local commercial situation is easier.

10. On the other hand, there was undoubtedly a great increase in emigration during the year. Emigration is, of course, a well-settled habit of the Lebanese, and they have gained much from it in the past. But they gain less from it now, as the United States are practically closed to them and entry into British territory is not easy. The increased flow of emigrants is due to the destruction resulting from the revolt which affected mainly the Southern Lebanon and the region round Baalbek. Something has been done to repair the damage, but it is, I am informed, little compared with what remains to be done. The people, who are impoverished and even homeless, hope to retrieve their fortunes abroad.

11. All things considered, public order was not in 1926 as bad as it was feared it would be. It is, of course, even now far from being normal in some parts, but it was proved during the summer that there was no ground for the apprehensions which then existed. Many people were at first afraid to go even to the nearer villages, and those summer resorts which are in purely Christian districts were by far the most popular. There was trouble inland from Tripoli as the result of bands coming into that part of the Lebanon from the Baalbek region. There was also insecurity in the Druse districts of the Metn and the Shouf, and even now there is a small band of outlaws in the latter district under one Fendi Bou Yaghi, whom the authorities cannot catch. The daily French intelligence reports contain many references to disorders and elements of potential disorder, but these are mainly in Syria. With reference to that State, it may be of interest to you to know that a distinguished officer, who held an important post under previous régimes and returned a few months ago, has openly expressed his amazement at the state of the country. The optimistic reports sent by M. de Jouvenel, to the effect that the revolt was over and things becoming normal again, had not prepared him for what he actually found.

12. The question of the Lebanese abroad, and as you know they are everywhere with very important colonies in the two Americas, came into prominence on several occasions in 1926. First it was the question of their losing their Lebanese nationality. If as few really opted as are said to have done, it can hardly have been mainly due to the slackness of the French authorities, against whom many reproaches were levelled. My experience of the Lebanese is that one of his main preoccupations is to acquire a foreign nationality. If he can obtain two so much the better. Then later came complaints that, like many others, the Lebanese in Mexico were having a rough time. The latest trouble is the alleged threat of the Turks to confiscate all Lebanese property in Turkey. If this were done the French would, I believe, retaliate by seizing Turkish property in Syria and the Lebanon, which is said to be considerable.

13. As regards the other State which forms my district, that of the Alaouites, it seems to be happy in that it has no especial history. It has, of course, a more backward and primitive population, which fact justifies the direct administration to which its prosperity is said to be due. I have never yet been able to visit it, but various Englishmen who were there last year described it as being in a flourishing condition. One of its latest efforts is to begin the construction of a really good road over the mountains to Aleppo. When this is finished, as it may be in the course of this year, it will be possible to motor direct from Beirut to Aleppo.

14. At present the future of Syria and the Lebanon seems to be, if not in the

lap of the gods, at any rate in that of the new High Commissioner. He has inspired respect, and the indications are that, once he has dealt with the present uneasy political situation, he will, as far as it is possible in this country, eschew politics and devote his energy to more useful aims. All depends whether he is properly supported by the French Government. If he is not they will probably have lost their last chance of making a success of the Syrian mandate.

Copies of this despatch have been sent to Bagdad and Jerusalem.

I have, &c.

H. E. SATOW.

[E 566/44/89]

No. 51.

Consul Hole to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received February 2.)

(No. 15. Confidential.)

Sir,

Damascus, January 24, 1927.

I HAVE the honour to refer to my despatch on Syrian affairs, No. 321, Confidential, of the 22nd December, 1926.

2. There have been few occurrences of interest during the month; communications have improved; the Nairn transport service has resumed the Damascus-Rutba route; trade appears to tend towards a revival; there is every appearance of calm in Damascus.

3. M. Ponsot arrived at Damascus on the 6th and he spent the whole of his stay interviewing officials at his house in Salhie, where he subjected them to a detailed interrogatory, on this occasion mainly concerned with question of policy. During this visit the High Commissioner devoted a good deal of time to eliciting civilians' view on military matters and *vice versa*—a departure from custom rather similar to the Spartans' deliberating drunk and sober. The civil and military authorities in Syria do not see eye to eye, and I gather that both parties treated the High Commissioner to entertaining revelations.

4. At the conclusion of his stay M. Ponsot instructed the Envoy Extraordinary to draw up a full political report; M. Pierre-Alype has accordingly spent the last ten days in its composition (it extends to 150 typewritten pages), and is leaving to-day for Beirut.

5. The press is optimistic with regard to the outcome of M. Ponsot's mission, and has produced a crop of forecasts of the particular variety of Syrian unity that will be granted. It will be interesting to see how far M. Ponsot will break with the Maronite tradition of his predecessors in Beirut. The only effective guarantee of future peace is a policy that tends to improve the economic situation of the State of Syria. The French have done enough to convince the Syrians of their military superiority, and stand to lose nothing by the reshuffling of *kaïmakams* between Syria and the Lebanon.

6. In the first week of January, a small band under Ali Atrash was defeated near Rasheida in the Jebel; the engagement was of slight interest except for the emphatic assertion of the official communiqué that the band came from and returned to Transjordan. This conviction of the connivance of Transjordanian authorities with the Druses and the maintenance of a supply base at Azrak flourishes more at Beirut (see Mr. Consul-General Satow's despatch No. 7 of the 12th January) than at Damascus, where officials are better acquainted with the feebleness of French hold of the desert.

7. There are many places nearer than Azrak where the French have no effective control. The whole of the country east of the Jebel and south of the Bagdad route is entirely inaccessible to the French; the Nair and Ghiath tribes which inhabit it are hostile; and it is situated at the limit of airplane cruising radius. It is highly probable that many of the remaining insurgents have their base in this district, and the French are themselves so sure of this that they are sending an emissary to Safa to endeavour to obtain the submission of Khalaf-el-Ayyash, the leading chieftain of the district. The terms offered are the surrender of fifty rifles, 3,000 cartridges, a fine of 250 gold pounds and the removal of his tribe to Karyatein; in view of the shady record of this gentleman, the conditions have been made surprising light, as it is hoped that the removal of his tribe will break up this focus of resistance.

8. It is evidently less galling for the French to ascribe the protraction of the rebellion to the machinations of a neighbour rather than to their own imperfect

control of parts of Syria, but I think it would be regrettable if French complaints about Azrak were taken too seriously. There have undoubtedly been abuses of Transjordanian hospitality by the Druze leaders, but the present state of things does not seem to justify the repetition of this *cliché* by the French Intelligence Corps.

9. There is talk of dissension in the Cabinet; the Damad's most loyal supporter, Youssef-el-Hakim, is said to have been alienated by a squabble over an appointment, where his own relative was passed over in favour of a nominee of the Damad's doctor and *âme damnée*, Rajab Ferdi.

10. Disturbances are reported from Homs during the last week, but my information is not yet sufficiently definite to enable me to report.

Copies of this despatch have been sent to Jerusalem (No. 3), Bagdad (No. 4), Amman (No. 9), Beirut (No. 7), and Aleppo (No. 3).

I have, &c.

E. C. HOLE.

[E 1496/72/44]

No. 52.

Consul Hough to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received March 29.)

(No. 24.)

Aleppo, March 15, 1927.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to submit some notes on the present position of the Bagdad Railway, which I trust may be of interest.

2. It is already well known to you that the branch from Derbessieh to Mardin was given priority of construction over the extension eastwards of the original *tracé*. It is completely made on normal gauge and has been working regularly for some time.

3. The plan for completing the stretch from Derbessieh to Nissibin has been for a long time engaging the attention of the company. At present the lines are roughly laid, and trains are occasionally run for special purposes. It is considered unsafe for them to go at more than 10 to 12 miles an hour, and at such a speed they are said to rock considerably.

4. The local management have been pressing on the head office in Paris for sanction to continue ballasting and other operations, but Paris is formally opposed to the scheme, and recently said that their decision against it was to be taken as final. M. Folliet is now preparing a scheme for reconstruction to be effected in a cheaper way which will allow trains to be run at 20 miles an hour, and still hopes to get this sanctioned.

5. It may be added that this stretch would have but little commercial importance, and M. Folliet probably has military traffic (Turkish and French) in mind as his expected source of revenue.

Copies of this despatch have been sent to Constantinople (No. 6), Bagdad (No. 23), Beirut (No. 24) and Damascus (No. 18).

I have, &c.

W. HOUGH.

[E 2111/44/89]

No. 53.

Consul Hole to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received May 10.)

(No. 54.)

Damascus, April 27, 1927.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that on the 25th March last commenced what is the eighth attempt to subdue the Leja which has been made by the French since the autumn. Up to a point it has been successful. Three weeks after the beginning of the operation the rebels ceased to offer any solid opposition to the French advance, and the latter now are in a position to make daily raids into the more northerly areas, although they cannot maintain posts there after nightfall. Nationalist gossip credits the French with many casualties, but I have no good evidence to show that there are more than should normally be expected in the case of a clearing operation on this scale and in such country. Moreover, as Colonel Catroux pointed out recently in an interview published in the "*Revue diplomatique*," to which doubtless your attention has already been directed, the French operations in Syria have taught their troops valuable lessons in fighting methods which the experiences of the

European War had tended to oust from standard military training in France. There is, no doubt, much truth in this contention, but the more severe losses in the past have been inflicted on Syrian troops, whom the French themselves despise, while the more recently arrived African troops, fresh from their Riff experiences, have given a far better account of themselves and are held in very wholesome respect by the rebels. Moreover, the French Circassian troops are effective in this type of fighting.

2. Meanwhile, the rebel party is attempting to create diversions. Sultan El Atrash is operating in the Safa, to the south-east of Damascus, and can cut the southern Bagdad road. Faouzi Kaoukji, with a band of some 200, has been carrying on guerilla warfare round Hama. He is operating about Riha and Maarit, and apparently is endeavouring to consolidate his position in the whole of the Jebel-ez-Zawya. On the 22nd instant the French, acting on information that he was in Hama, surrounded a quarter of that town and carried through a rigorous police search, in the course of which some fighting occurred, but without result.

3. Native informants tell me that they went so far as to bombard the quarter in question, which is the Khadir, a chosen residence of well-to-do landowners. If this be so, it may well be yet another indication of the policy directed towards cowering the landed proprietor class, whose quarter in Damascus was deliberately destroyed and who were specially singled out for hard treatment in the Jebel Druse.

4. In spite of Faouzi Kaoukji's energy and address I very much doubt whether he will be able to raise the north in open rebellion. The lesson of Damascus may have been deplorable but, from the point of view of those responsible for order in this country, and that after all is the primary duty of the French military command, it has been most salutary. Nor, as at present advised, do I imagine that the autumn will see any realisation of Nationalist hopes for a fresh occupation of the Ghouta by the rebel forces. The country has lost heavily in blood and prosperity, and sane opinion is tending more and more to the belief that no actual gain can ever come out of a policy of insurrection and brigandage.

5. I am sending a copy of this despatch direct to His Majesty's consul-general at Beirut, His Majesty's consul at Aleppo, the chief British representative at Amman, His Majesty's High Commissioners at Jerusalem and Bagdad.

I have, &c.

E. C. HOLE.

[E 2152/21/89]

No. 54.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 1355.)

My Lord Marquess,

Foreign Office, May 11, 1927.

THE French Ambassador expressed to me to-day the high appreciation of the French Government for the assistance recently given to the French authorities in Syria by the British authorities in Trans-Jordan. The action taken in regard to the last bands of Druse refugees in Trans-Jordan would contribute to the re-establishment of order in the general interest of the two mandatory Powers.

I am, &c.

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

CHAPTER III.—IRAQ.

[E 704/122/65]

No. 55.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir G. Clerk (Constantinople).

(No. 107.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 11, 1927.

IN leaving with me the attached *aide-mémoire* alleging that two British military aeroplanes had flown over Turkish territory on the Iraq frontier, the Turkish Ambassador added that he regretted to say that a Turkish post had fired upon the aeroplanes, happily on this occasion without result; but that the incident caused him anxiety lest, if again repeated, it should give rise to serious difficulty.

2. The Ambassador mentioned that he had reported to Sir William Tyrrell while I was absent at Geneva in September last a similar incident, and had made a suggestion that each Government should instruct its aviators not to go within 5 kilom. of the frontier. He begged that this proposal might be considered.

3. I informed his Excellency that the charge against British aviators of having penetrated 40 kilom. inside the Turkish frontier appeared to me so improbable as to be almost impossible, but I should, of course, make enquiries at once, and at the same time take up his proposal for the prohibition of flying within 5 kilom. on either side of the boundary.

4. Since seeing Ferid Bey, I have sent to the Departments interested the letter, of which a copy is enclosed herein.*

I am, &c.

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

Enclosure in No. 55.

Aide-mémoire.

LE 5 janvier 1927, deux avions militaires britanniques ont de nouveau survolé les territoires turcs, en dépassant la frontière turco-irakienne, dans le district de Tchah, et ont pénétré de 40 kilom. environ à l'intérieur, dans la direction de Tehoub.

*Ambassade turque, Londres,
le 9 février 1927.*

No. 56.

Sir G. Clerk to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 14.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Constantinople, February 21, 1927.

FOLLOWING addressed to Bagdad, No. 11:—

"Turkish Government state that they have information that 10,000 Kurdish irregulars are massing in Iraq territory near Syrian frontier for incursions into Turkish territory, and ask for help of Iraq Government in frustrating these preparations in accordance with article 6 of Treaty of Angora.

"What reply should I return?"

[E 902/122/65]

No. 57.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Ahmed Ferid Bey.

Your Excellency,

Foreign Office, March 5, 1927.

ON the 9th February your Excellency left with me an *aide-mémoire*, in which it was stated that, on the 5th January last, two British military aeroplanes, having crossed the Turco-Iraq frontier in the Chal district, had penetrated into Turkish territory for a distance of some 40 kilom.

2. I have the honour to inform you that His Majesty's Government have caused enquiries to be made of the local authorities in Iraq, as a result of which they are

* Not printed.

[16696]

K 2

satisfied that no British aeroplanes did, in fact, cross the Turco-Iraq frontier, as was believed to be the case by the Turkish authorities.

3. His Majesty's Government have also given careful consideration to the proposal made in your note of the 26th January, that no aeroplanes, Turkish or British, should be permitted to fly within a distance of 5 kilom. on either side of the frontier. They regret, however, that they are unable to accept that proposal, since it would involve the isolation of certain frontier posts, with which communication can only be maintained by air at certain seasons of the year, when ground patrols cannot visit these posts.

4. The Turkish Government may rest assured that the greatest care will continue to be exercised, in order to ensure that Royal Air Force aircraft do not cross the Turco-Iraq frontier.

I have, &c.

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

No. 58.

Sir G. Clerk (No. 18) to High Commissioner, Bagdad.—(Repeated to Foreign Office; Received April 23.)

(No. 37.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Constantinople, April 23, 1927.

FOLLOWING received from acting counsellor at Angora:—

"Bagdad telegram No. 40 S.

"I have received from Ministry for Foreign Affairs a note stating that Turkish Government has decided to apply with all energy to Iraq tribes, if they enter Turkish territory, measures prescribed against persons crossing the frontier irregularly. They express the hope that Iraq authorities will take steps to prevent any untoward incident that might thus arise, and add that they will in their turn prevent Turkish tribes from wintering in Iraq."

No. 59.

Sir G. Clerk (No. 19) to High Commissioner, Bagdad.—(Repeated to Foreign Office; Received April 23.)

(No. 38.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, April 23, 1927.

MY immediately preceding telegram.

I am going to Angora to-morrow, and will impress on Minister for Foreign Affairs that intended action of Turkish Government not only inflicts unmerited hardship on peaceful and harmless tribes who are following custom of generations, but is bound to have unfortunate effect on Turkish relations with Iraq. I presume that migration is already in full swing, and I will do my best to secure tolerable treatment for those who may have already crossed the frontier. In view, however, of Turkish policy towards the Kurds, as known to you, I have little hope of success.

No. 60.

Sir G. Clerk (No. 4) to High Commissioner, Bagdad.—(Repeated to Foreign Office; Received April 29.)

(No. 5.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Angora, April 29, 1927.

MY telegram No. 38 from Constantinople to Foreign Office.

Minister for Foreign Affairs at first interview said he would ascertain from Ministry of the Interior present state of things on the border before giving me final answer. Yesterday evening he told me Ministry had no information and implied that in any case as the district was under the independent control of an inspector-general he himself had nothing to say in regard to measures against migrating tribes. He maintained intention of Turkish Government to act as announced, but in response to my urgent plea said he would try to see that measures that may be taken against this year's migration should be applied as leniently and with as much consideration as possible.

[E 2103/84/65]

No. 61.

Sir G. Clerk to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received May 9.)

(No. 214.)

HIS Majesty's representative at Constantinople presents his compliments to His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit herewith copies of a note sent to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and of a note from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, dated the 28th April, respecting rectification in text of description of Brussels line.

Constantinople, May 4, 1927.

Enclosure 1 in No. 61.

Sir G. Clerk to Dr. Tewfik Rushdi Bey.

M. le Ministre,

Angora, le 28 avril 1927.

J'AI l'honneur, d'ordre de mon Gouvernement, de confirmer à votre Excellence l'adhésion du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique ainsi que du Gouvernement de l'Irak à la rectification suivante d'un passage erroné du texte de l'annexe à l'article 1^{er} du traité conclu entre les Gouvernements de la Grande-Bretagne, de l'Irak et de la Turquie, qui fut signé à Angora, le 5 juin 1926.

Le passage en question dans le texte du traité tel qu'il a été signé et ratifié est ainsi conçu :

"Une droite jusqu'à cette source (l'affluent mentionné ci-dessus est le Rudbar-i-Shin, qui passe en aval, jusqu'à l'embouchure de la rivière un peu au sud de Deh)."

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique et le Gouvernement de l'Irak acceptent qu'il lui soit substitué le texte suivant :

"Une droite jusqu'à cette source. L'affluent mentionné ci-dessus et le Rudbar-i-Shin en aval jusqu'à l'embouchure de la rivière qui passe un peu au sud de Deh."

Les Gouvernements de Sa Majesté britannique et de l'Irak considéreront la rectification du texte effectuée par le présent échange de notes comme faisant partie du Traité d'Angora et le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique la communiquera aux États signataires du Traité de Lausanne, conformément aux dispositions de l'article 18 du Traité d'Angora.

Je saisis, &c.

GEORGE R. CLERK.

Enclosure 2 in No. 61.

Dr. Tewfik Rushdi Bey to Sir G. Clerk.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Angora, le 28 avril 1927.

J'AI l'honneur de confirmer à votre Excellence l'adhésion du Gouvernement turc à la rectification suivante d'un passage erroné du texte de l'annexe à l'article 1^{er} du traité conclu entre les Gouvernements de Turquie, de Grande-Bretagne et d'Irak, qui fut signé à Angora, le 5 juin 1926.

Le passage en question dans le texte du traité tel qu'il a été signé et ratifié est ainsi conçu :

"Une droite jusqu'à cette source (l'affluent mentionné ci-dessus est le Rudbar-i-Shin, qui passe en aval, jusqu'à l'embouchure de la rivière un peu au sud de Deh)."

Le Gouvernement de la République turque accepte qu'il lui soit substitué le texte suivant :

"Une droite jusqu'à cette source. L'affluent mentionné ci-dessus et le Rudbar-i-Shin en aval jusqu'à l'embouchure de la rivière qui passe un peu au sud de Deh."

Le Gouvernement turc considère la rectification du texte effectuée par le présent échange de notes comme faisant partie du Traité d'Angora et la communiquera aux États signataires du Traité de Lausanne, conformément aux dispositions de l'article 18 du Traité d'Angora.

DR. T. ROUCHDI.

CHAPTER IV.—GENERAL.

[E 808/394/65]

No. 62.

Colonial Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 16.)

Sir,

Colonial Office, February 16, 1927.

IN continuation of correspondence ending with the letter from this Department of the 4th January, 1927, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Amery to enclose, to be laid before the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a despatch,* with enclosure, which he is addressing to the High Commissioner for Palestine on the subject of Sir Wyndham Deedes's recent visit to Poland on behalf of the Zionist Organisation.

Mr. Amery would be glad to be favoured with any comments that Sir Austen Chamberlain may have to offer on the suggestions made in the penultimate paragraph of Sir W. Deedes's report.

I am, &c.

J. E. SHUCKBURGH.

Enclosure in No. 62.

Extract from Report by Sir W. Deedes, dated January 25, 1927.

COULD not His Majesty's representatives abroad take some occasional interest in the Zionist movement in the countries to which they are accredited? Could they not, for example, give a reception for Zionists on the 2nd November, the anniversary of the Balfour declaration? Could they not, when invited, attend Zionist functions, exhibitions of Palestine products, and take an interest generally in Zionist activities? In some countries this may be done. But I have reason to suppose that it is not done in all. If done, it would go some way to reassure Zionists as to the continued interest of His Majesty's Government in the movement, of which they are the sponsors. There may be some to whom "the Jewish peril" is more than an expression, who in consequence fear lest the slight measures of recognition of Zionists here recommended add to the responsibilities of His Majesty's Government or to the unpopularity which we have perhaps already incurred by reason of our world-wide influence. I would, however, submit that the very mild form of recognition here suggested could not possibly be attended by any ill consequences.

[E 808/394/65]

No. 63.

Foreign Office to Colonial Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 25, 1927.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Austen Chamberlain to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th February, enclosing a report by Sir Wyndham Deedes on the visit to Poland which he recently made on behalf of the Zionist organisation.

2. The Secretary of State does not view with favour the suggestion contained in the penultimate paragraph of the report, to the effect that His Majesty's representatives abroad should be in any way actively associated with the Zionist movement, or should hold a reception on the 2nd November, the anniversary of the Balfour declaration. Such action might well be misunderstood by foreign Governments to whom His Majesty's representatives are accredited, and thereby rather impede than promote this movement.

3. In Sir Austen Chamberlain's opinion it is best that the Zionist organisation should conduct their own propaganda, and that any public indication which may be considered necessary, from time to time, as regards the interest taken by His Majesty's Government in the success of the Zionist scheme, should be given, not by His Majesty's representatives abroad, but by His Majesty's Government in this

* Enclosure not printed, except penultimate paragraph of Sir W. Deedes's report.

country—for example, by means of a statement made in Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Such manifestations of sympathy are not liable to be misconstrued in the same way as the proposed activities on behalf of this cause might be if undertaken by His Majesty's representatives abroad.

I am, &c.

LANCELOT OLIPHANT.

[E 2139/86/65]

No. 64.

Memorandum.

I RECEIVED the new Iraq Diplomatic Agent to-day.

I offered him a welcome to this country and expressed my hope that his stay among us would be pleasant to him and useful to our two countries. He then delivered a very friendly message expressing the desire of King Feisal and the Government of Iraq to cultivate and strengthen the friendly relations existing between the two countries and their appreciation of the assistance and friendship constantly shown by His Majesty's Government.

I told him that he would find that the sentiments which he expressed were shared by everyone here. We rejoiced in the satisfactory relations prevailing between us, which had already enabled Iraq to achieve a very remarkable progress in the few years since the new State had come into existence, and we should co-operate with the Government of Iraq in the development of that country and rejoice when progress had been carried to such a point that her entry into the League of Nations could be proposed and accepted by the League. The disturbing dispute in regard to the frontier between Iraq and Turkey had been settled by friendly negotiation with Turkey after the Council of the League had been persuaded by the powerful arguments of Mr. Amery to give a decision in favour of Iraq, and now that this question was out of the way the peaceful development of Iraq and friendly relations with the neighbouring State of Turkey ought to be greatly facilitated. No doubt the presence of Kurdish tribes on both sides of the frontier might give rise to some difficulties, as it certainly rendered the Turkish Government very suspicious, but these difficulties ought to be overcome with prudence and watchfulness on the part of the Government of Iraq. The prospects appeared to me favourable.

I then invited the Agent to confer directly with the Secretary of State for the Colonies on detailed business, since my colleague would be much better informed than I, and he would in this way arrive at a quicker and more satisfactory solution than if the negotiations always passed through me. It was, of course, customary for foreign representatives here to come in the first instance to the Foreign Office, but in matters which particularly concerned other Departments I was for this reason accustomed to invite them to deal directly with those Departments.

A. C.

*Foreign Office,
May 10, 1927.*